

AN HISTORICAL
ACCOUNT
Saml. OF THE *Barker*
BRITISH TRADE
OVER THE
CASPIAN SEA:
WITH A
JOURNAL of TRAVELS
FROM

LONDON through RUSSIA into PERSIA; and
back through RUSSIA, GERMANY and HOL-
LAND.

To which are added,

The revolutions of PERSIA during the present cen-
tury, with the particular history of the great usur-
per NADIR KOULI.

VOL. II.

By JONAS HANWAY, Merchant.

D U B L I N:

Printed for WILLIAM SMITH, and RICHARD JAMES,
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MDCC LIV,

AN HISTORICAL

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FROM

London through Russia and Persia; and
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way.

To which are added,

The results of the journey, and a
series of papers relating to the
geography and history of the
Caspian Sea.

VOL. II.

By J. R. COOPER, Esq.
F.R.S.E., F.R.G.S., &c.

Printed for William Evans and Thomas Agnew,
London and Manchester.

MDCCCLX.

To the right honourable

GEORGE LORD ANSON,

Baron of SOBERTON,

Vice-admiral of England, first Lord Commissioner of the admiralty, and one of his Majesty's most honourable privy-council.

My Lord,

WHEN the various events were known of the famous expedition to the South-Seas, under your Lordship's direction, your calmness and constancy, in circumstances so discouraging, and oftentimes terrible, naturally excited a respectful idea of your character : but we have since been indebted in great measure to your Lordship for more eminent services. You had the command in the first truly English day, which gave a turn to the late war, and diverted the blow aimed at an important branch of our commerce. That day gave the first mortal wound to the maritime power of France, and compensated for the little success of our arms in Flanders. And here, my Lord, affection for my brother, who did his duty under your auspices, as well as the love of my country, demand the tribute of my particular thanks.

The desire of distinction, so deeply implanted in our nature, can have no principle more noble than that of advancing the happiness of the society. The highest offices of life, necessarily create a pre-eminence in toil ; the possessors of them are therefore intitled to the greater veneration. Men of active spirits are ever looking forward. The same genius which has hitherto conducted your Lordship will still lead you on to the increase of your fame, and the acquisition of new honour. On that board at which your Lordship presides, depends in a very great degree

the welfare and safety of this nation. The splendor of this monarchy is supported by commerce, and commerce by naval strength. Whilst the several states of Europe accumulate maritime power, your Lordship's charge receives an additional weight; and in proportion as your services prove instrumental to your country's welfare, your glory will increase.

In the following sheets *, which I have the honour to present to your Lordship, we have a remarkable instance of the pomp and splendor of one of the greatest eastern monarchies, humbled even to the dust by the iniquitous conduct of ministers. How great the contrast between these and the nearer examples with which we are furnished by our own country! Pursuits actuated by honest motives, directed by wise laws, under a just and legal sovereign, should they erect no other trophy than an honourable tomb, must be incomparably preferable to the proudest monuments of successful villainy.

But providence has been indulgent to your Lordship: your endeavours for the service of your country, have been brought to a successful issue, and your wishes accomplished in the reward of those services. May that providence still protect you in all the important concerns of your station, and in all the circumstances of your private life. I am, with great respect,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's

most obedient

humble servant,

London,
January, 1753.

Jonas Hanway.

* Alluding to the history of the revolution of Persia, published in this volume.

VOL. II. PART I.

T H E

AUTHOR'S RETURN

T H R O U G H

Germany and Holland to England, continued.

C H A P. I.

A short account of Zell, the adjacent country, and the passage of the Elbe. Observations on the hospitality of the British factory in Hamburg, with some reflections on the sacrament. Of the body corporate of that factory. Of the houses, inhabitants, government, military force, fortification, territories, and trade of Hamburg. A short account of Altona.

THE 13th of September I left Hanover, and proceeded to Enzen, a small mean village; the road to this place exhibits little more than heath, with very few houses and inhabitants, for two German miles and a half. From thence to Zell is two German miles and a half; the chief production of the country near the road, is turf, which serves as fuel for the adjacent inhabitants. About three feet from the surface of the earth, I observed in several places the remains of antient buildings, which the common people are idle enough to think have remained there ever since the deluge.

Zell is a very considerable place, and guarded by a fortification: it has been formerly the residence of the dukes of that name, but by marriage it is now devolved to the house of Hanover. The palace is fortified by a wall and a mote, and, being on an eminence, commands an extensive prospect. Here are four Lutheran churches, one French, and one Dutch reformed church, and one for the Roman catholics. The buildings for the most part are very mean, being chiefly of wood. The town has a small

trade with Bremen, by means of the river Aller; and now afforded quarters to a regiment of 700 men. It has been also long distinguished for a stud of exceeding fine horses, of which I saw many: here are sometimes to the number of one hundred and fifty; the pedigree of each horse is marked on the post of the stall. Besides many beautiful horses for the saddle, there is a very fine set of cream-coloured horses for a coach of state.

From Zell I travelled to Weiffendorff, which is four excessive long German miles; the greatest part of the way appears like a desert, having only 3 or 4 mean villages, and very little corn land, but some flocks of sheep. This electorate supplies the greatest part of Germany with mutton, as Brandenburg and Westphalia produces hogs, and Hungary beef; but the trade in corn is very small, as each of those countries produces sufficient for its own consumption.

On the 15th I went to Zæhrendorf, four German miles, the country still abounding in heaths and woods. The villagers in some places complained of the unwholesome air. Whether this arises from the earth not being cultivated, the number of inhabitants being small, or from the badness of the soil I cannot determine. On the 16th I travelled on to Hamburg, four German miles: the country towards the banks of the Elbe has a more agreeable aspect. Travellers sometimes go by Spickerwick, where the Elbe being much narrower, the passage is short, and the charge easy; from thence on the north east banks of the Elbe there are many delightful gardens in the territories of Hamburg; whereas at Harburg it is five or six English miles cross the Elbe to Hamburg. The banks of this river below the city, are in some places very lofty, and exhibit a delightful view of the several small islands in the middle of it. It is very unlucky for travellers who are well inclined to entertain a good opinion of the electorate of Hanover, that the road from the metropolis cross the country to the Elbe in the rout to Hamburg, has so barren and desolate an appearance. The districts of Zell and Lunenburg are by no means scenes of pleasure or profit; but at some distance from the road in proper Hanover, I am assured are lands fertile and well peopled, which indeed ought to be inferred from the amount of the revenues of this electorate, as already mentioned; though these arise chiefly from the mines.

The 17th. Being now arrived in a great trading city, amongst a considerable British factory, with some of the members of which I had particular connexions from commercial



mercial interest, I considered myself as at home; and indeed the politeness, hospitality, and agreeable conversation of the factory in general made it such to me.

It is a common vice of mankind to suffer the most trivial incidents of life to divert them from religious duties, and to furnish themselves with an excuse for that neglect. The day after my arrival being the sabbath, if the motive of devotion had failed, curiosity would, I think, have carried me to divine service: of all curses idleness seems to be one of the worst, and of all kinds of idleness, that of neglecting the sabbath seems to be the most unworthy. "Remember that thou keep holy the sabbath day," is as clear an injunction as "Thou shalt not murder;" as clear and forcible as if the Almighty was to look down from the battlements of heaven, and declare in thunder "This is my will." But if the foundations of the earth were shaken, would men awake to their duty? The chaplain, Mr. Murray, gave us an excellent discourse on this text, "Take this in remembrance of me;" he remarked "That men, who are really sincere, and endeavour to think and act well, are not disqualified from receiving the sacrament from what they imagine or fear, however seemingly contrary to the spirit of religion." A weak judgment and a roving fancy are most certainly apt to disturb the best men; but the real good or evil in consequence of the sacrament, must be determined by the effect it has on our lives; by engaging us to forsake our sins, as we thereby covenant and agree to do: this law is of eternal obligation, whether we commemorate his death or not; but if we will not commemorate, we break one essential part of that law, by neglecting his absolute command, "Take this in remembrance of me;" an argument which is intelligible to a child, and as conclusive as volumes of theology. If the taking that sacrament is enjoined as the means of remembering him; as a token of remembrance, and as an act of gratitude to him as a friend and benefactor; to neglect this command seems to imply, that we do not choose to remember him, nor to take any pains to express our gratitude to him. Were we to judge from the conduct of some christians, one would be tempted to think such an injunction was really never made, or that they really were not christians.

It is very familiar to common observation, that men who demonstrate a scrupulous forbearance of offences which are clearly forbidden, do not regard this duty, though it is as

clearly commanded; as if one implied guilt, but not the other. If they were just to themselves, they would not only reflect on the absurdity of this conduct, but also that they neglect one of the most essential means of procuring the pardon of their sins.

This is a long introduction to a short story. The congregation of the British factory at Hamburg, though neither methodists nor fanatics; being about fifty persons of both sexes, all, except one, received the sacrament on this occasion. A sight which I never saw before, nor ever expect to see again, unless I should happen to go to Hamburg. The chapel belonging to the factory is very neatly finished with oak, and of a proper and convenient size. Mr. Murray is deservedly beloved for his learning and agreeable conversation, for his persuasive discourses, and the natural and just manner in which he delivers them.

The British factory which removed from Flanders to Hamburg, are possessed of privileges since about 1610, confirmed by a convention with the regency, as distinguished as any body of foreigners enjoy in any part of the commercial world. The Hamburgers found it their interest to indulge them, inasmuch that, till the revolution, they had an exclusive privilege of importing cloth; but this liberty is now free to any inhabitants of the city. The factory is incorporated into a company, consisting of thirteen members, a governor^a, and deputy governor^b. All disputes among themselves are referred to the final decision of a majority of voices. They also judge with regard to their demands on the burghers; but in this case a deputation of two senators is required to act in concert with them. Their judgments are so just and summary that the burghers generally make application to them, when they have demands upon any of the British factors, preferring their decisions to any other court in the jurisdiction of the city. The trade of this company is not so considerable as it was at the latter end of the last century.

Besides the pleasure which they enjoy in domestic diversions and mutual acts of hospitality, the king of Denmark has granted them a privilege of hunting in his jurisdiction, to the extent of about ten English miles, and some of the factors often take this amusement.

Hamburg

^a Mr. John Gore.
on the spot.

^b Mr. John Thornton, who resides

Hamburg is well known to be a hanse town of the most importance of any in Europe. It is said to have derived its name from the adjacent forest of Ham, so early as the beginning of the eighth century: its reputation for laws, and situation for trade, has long since furnished it with opulent inhabitants. It stands in the dukedom of Holstein, on the north side of the Elbe, where this river forms many islands; some part of the town is so low, that north west winds and high tides extremely incommode the inhabitants, by the overflowing of the water. The houses are built very strong and lofty, and many of them are extremely neat. Most of the streets are so narrow as hardly to suffer wheel carriages to pass each other, but their coachmen are remarkably dexterous. Vehicles of this sort, which were hardly known amongst them seventy years ago, are now very common. There are also many streets which are spacious, but these lying higher, and more detached from the water, are not so much frequented by merchants of any consideration.

Here are generally ministers from most of the princes in Europe, but I believe more for the affairs and correspondence relating to Germany and the north, than for what regards the city. I had the pleasure of being very politely received, particularly by Mr. Cope, the English resident, who is much beloved.

The number of inhabitants in this city, appears to be larger than it really is; as much the greatest part of them are abroad and in motion. Mechanics are not numerous here; and of manufactures, sugar-baking and calicoe-printing are the great articles; gold and silver lace, silks and stockings are also made, but in no considerable quantities. The families which pay scot and lot are about 14,000, and the soldiery, including their wives and children, are reckoned 10,000. There is about the same number of foreigners; so that, reckoning seven persons to a family, the whole makes 118,000. The suburbs and villages adjacent, may encrease it to half as many more.

The better sort of people here are extremely affable, most of them having travelled; but the women are bred up with great reserve. They generally go veiled with black silk; but not so as to hide their faces, when they have any reason to entertain a favourable opinion of their own beauty. There are many instances of gay life, especially at particular seasons, yet there is no appearance of state or grandeur amongst them; their chief pursuit is trade. Those who have

left off business are esteemed in the same rank with merchants. As there are no marks of regal authority to create a due subordination, the easy circumstances of the greatest part of the inhabitants, have introduced a species of insolence and imposition on strangers, peculiar to a republican state: the common people tread close upon the heels of those of higher rank. I observed also they have introduced the custom of giving money to servants; and, as in some other countries, convert the domestic obligations of society into acts of venality.

The government of this city is composed of four burgo-masters; the emoluments annexed to their offices generally yield 1000*l.* a year each, particularly the two elder of them, who have the disposal of several places. The next in rank are senators, of whom there are twenty-four; their dress resembles the antient habit of the Spaniards: fourteen of these must be chosen from among the merchants, and ten bred to the study of the law. The senators are sometimes very illiterate persons, but when chosen they are obliged to forsake their shops, and keep a coach. Their salary is two hundred pounds per annum, but they are chosen for life, and their perquisites are considerable: suits at law are determined by the senate; criminal affairs by the senate and burghers. There are also four *sindics*, or lawyers, who act as secretaries of the state, and on whom the greatest weight of the executive part of the government lies; next to these are four real secretaries. The city is divided into five parishes, in which are five capital churches; the most modern, dedicated to St. Michael, was reduced to ashes by lightening in 1749. There is also the Dome, which is a cathedral church governed by a dean and secular canons, remarkable for its antiquity, being built in the time of Charlemagne; it is now partly under the protection of his majesty king George, in the quality of duke of Bremen and Verden: each of these parishes has three officers in the nature of the tribunes of the people among the antient Romans; and nothing of moment is resolved on by the senate without their concurrence. When taxes are laid on the people, fifty burghers of each parish must be present to constitute a proper assembly for this purpose, and the same tax is never prolonged above a year. Upon these occasions the gates of the city are shut, and no body permitted to go in or out till the assembly is broke up. Tho' upon the principle of that liberty which I have mentioned, the inhabitants are sometimes

times with difficulty kept within bounds; yet, in the ordinary course of things, good order and œconomy are preserved.

The religion established here is the Lutheran; nor is there a toleration as in Amsterdam, or London. The Roman catholics are objects of great jealousy; but the Jews are indulged, and support themselves by commerce and brokerage: indeed the greatest part of the Polish jews appear to be in a wretched condition; but the Portuguese are not in such despicable circumstances.

The establishment of regular forces in the city is 2500 men; but the magistracy seldom support so many: they are however very cautious in shutting their gates early, and will, upon no occasion, open a wicket, though the town might raise a considerable tax by means of it. This part of œconomy puts a great restraint on the citizens, and habituates them the more to moderation in pursuit of pleasures and amusement.

The fortifications of this town, on the land-side, are considered as very strong; but the greatest security of it is the jealousy of the several princes, who have, from time to time, formed pretensions, and cast an ambitious eye towards it. The walk round the ramparts is about four English miles, and in most parts very pleasant. On the east side is a large piece of water formed by a small river called the Alster, within the walls, on which the town's people amuse themselves in the summer, by rowing about it, attended by bands of musicians.

The citizens have also several gardens on the banks of the Elbe and Alster, some of which are agreeable: but they are mostly in the Dutch-taste, very small, and kept in such exquisite order, as rather to exhibit a puppet-shew, than a rural scene; much less is there any grandeur in them.

The territories of this city are but small: on the north-west side there is a considerable fort on an eminence, which serves as an out-work to the town, and as a boundary of its dominion; Altona, on the west, is within half a mile. To the north they have only about one mile; but to the east, along the banks of the Elbe, about sixteen, which, in the broadest place, is not above four miles^c.

Several of the citizens, who have acquired great fortunes by commerce, have purchased large estates in the neighbouring territories, under the jurisdiction of the several princes; but this is apt to create jealousies among those

^c In this passage I mean English miles.

whose property is in trade only, or within the territory of Hamburg. Monsieur Pierre Hifs, a French merchant, to whom I am obliged for the polite reception he gave me, is said to be worth above 100,000*l.* acquired from a very small beginning; and there are others, whose opulence is not inferior.

This place must be considered with respect to Germany, what Amsterdam is to Europe, a magazine of the different produce, and merchandize of the trading world. Many of the houses are built on the very edge of the canals, so that ships may unload into their ware-houses. The number of vessels, of any considerable burthen, belonging to the town, is computed at four hundred, of which thirty of the principal are employed in the trade to and from London. They have many in the French trade, particularly about forty, which bring wine, and other commodities, from Bourdeaux; a great number in the Greenland trade, besides many which navigate the Baltic, and some also to Portugal, Spain, the Mediterranean, &c.

They keep their accounts in marks and schillings, 16 schillings to a mark. The agio varies, but the bank-money is generally about 15 or 16 per cent. better than current.

Formerly the Danish money was their chief currency, but now they have a coin of their own; one Hamburg schilling is equal to two Danish, or a penny English. There are 4 schilling pieces, or $\frac{1}{4}$ mark, and 8 schillings or $\frac{1}{2}$ mark. A ducat, which passes for 2 and $\frac{1}{2}$ dollars in Brandenburg and Saxony, is worth here 2 $\frac{1}{3}$ dollars of Hamburg. Here is a difference of bank and current money, as in Amsterdam; a ducat which passes for 7 marks current, is worth but 6 bank money; 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ schillings are equal to 2 gude groschen; and all sorts of money are taken here, valued according to foreign exchange.

The mouth of the Elbe, at the north-sea, is about thirteen German miles distance; the navigation is difficult, yet, except some of the largest vessels, they can unload at the town, the tide coming up about four German miles above Hamburg. Its ebb leaves most of the canals of the city dry; but there is a good bed of mud for the ships.

I have already observed, that the manufactures of this place, except that of baking sugar, and printing calicoes, are very inconsiderable, though the art of dying is well known here. They export quantities of Silesia linens from hence under the name of Hamburg. A great part of this branch of commission-business is indeed fallen into the hands

of

of the merchants of Altona, the Hamburgers having injudiciously charged a small duty on them, which they have since taken off, and made it a free port for the transit of all goods: but they cannot recover this business in the same manner as before. There are other branches, of which the Hamburgers have been obliged to yield a part to other nations. The trade of Lubec, which was sunk very low, has mended of late years. Stetin which was hardly known as a trading town, now begins to make some figure in commerce; and we find the king of Prussia endeavouring to establish Embden as a place of trade. Copenhagen, of late years, is improved; and a vast trade established in St. Petersburg, which did not exist till this century; but above all, France, since the queen's war, has made large strides in the advancement of her commercial interest. These concurring reasons must necessarily diminish the trade of Hamburg.

As mankind increase in numbers, at least in Europe, together with arts, luxurious indulgences, and the refinements of life; it is natural to presume that commerce, in general, encreases also; though it is subject to change hands. But nothing, I think, is more demonstrable than this, that the state which has most naval power, supposing the people have a genius for commerce, and are situated advantageously for it, must have the greatest portion. Will it be surprising, if in a few ages, war should become entirely, as it already is in a great measure, subservient to the ends of trade? Upon this principle it is rather an argument of the virtue and equity of mankind, that so inconsiderable a state as Hamburg should have yet so great a trade, than that it is in some degree diminished.

As nations grow enlightened, they will forsake their indolence, and go to market, where the commodity is cheapest; passing by those who are enriched by their former industry and sagacity, in collecting the different productions of the earth; consequently these lesser states, whose consumption within themselves is small, will decline in commercial power.

It has been generally imagined, that luxury is a great cause of the increase of commerce: that it has enlarged the scene, and occasioned an increase of several of the productions of the earth, is beyond dispute. Hence the use of tobacco, sugar, tea, spices, and other commodities, which are of very little real benefit to mankind, and yet are become great articles of commerce all over the world. But these

these have been attended also with improvements of essential service, particularly that of manufactures, which being now spread over the whole earth; the skins of beasts, which were formerly the great article of cloathing, are not worn, except in very cold countries, or as a rich and costly dress. These have been exchanged for the manufactures of wool, and other materials, much beyond what the animals furnished in the simple manner of life of our forefathers: some of these indeed had hardly any cloaths at all. But to come down to the present time, France has now near thirty times the quantity of woollen cloth, to what she manufactured in the beginning of this century ¹. And England already so far advanced, has made vast improvements. In the last century calculators valued our wool at two millions, now they reckon near four millions ^{*}. The same wool manufactured is now computed worth twelve millions; whereas it then amounted to 8 millions only.

But as things necessary, and in their nature good, are become common, and supplied in a great profusion; that which was magnificence, is no longer so: numerous improvements however being added, it takes that name again. When these improvements are carried to an excess beyond what our fortunes, and duties of life will bear, it becomes luxury; and luxury is in its nature ruinous. We see even the lower classes of mankind have acquired a taste of many things, not only beyond the simplicity of life which nature dictates, but also beyond what their circumstances will bear. These new passions craving their object; an equal pace must be kept by industry, and the productions of the earth. All excesses require great labour to support them. The people of a country, who live very high, to use a vulgar expression, are apt to light their candle at both ends; that is to say, they are apt to consume too much, and work too little. Hence they are also more subject to misfortunes, because that will appear as a misfortune under such circumstances, which otherwise would not be regarded. There is a medium; if we pass beyond it, we prepare the way for ruin. Luxury and corruption have ever been the destruction of states; and nothing can be more plain than this, that there would be little or no corruption, if there was no luxury.

To return to the Hamburgers: what has clipt their wings, though not in so great a degree as generally imagined, is the neighbourhood

¹ See chap. viii. but this remark alludes to Languedoc only.

^{*} Near 70,000 packs at 6 l.

neighbourhood of Altona, which signifies, much too near, as indeed it is for their interest; having the advantage of situation the same as Hamburg; but it has no fortification, nor is the Danish sovereignty so great a security of its commerce, as the independency of a Hanse town is to Hamburg. Altona has been long considered by the Hamburgers as an object of great jealousy; but there is not, I apprehend, so much cause to fear, as is suggested by many.

Altona is a large place, but does not partake in the least of the pride of Hamburg, with regard to its buildings; nor can it afford to pay any thing of consequence towards the revenues of Denmark. It is an asylum for those who fly from the adjacent countries for debt, or worse crimes: the Hamburgers, whose fortunes reduce them to this extremity, take refuge there also. Except two or three houses of business, there is very little appearance of riches or plenty in Altona. In opposition to Hamburg it encourages all religions, so that there is a medley of the poorer classes of mankind, particularly of Polish Jews. In the war with Sweden in 1713, the town was burnt to the ground, and now appears as new. The Hamburgers not daring to risk their own security, by opening their gates in the night, when a Swedish army was so near, and when a sickness prevailed amongst the inhabitants of Altona; many of the latter perished as monuments of Swedish cruelty.

The continual losses suffered by the Algerine rovers, who thought it their interest to decline all accommodation, have been a great obstruction to the trade of Hamburg; and the more as they can hardly, with any assurance, ask the assistance of any sovereign prince, and particularly a maritime power, who is a competitor in point of commerce. During the last war they had several ships on the western ocean, and the Mediterranean; but hostilities at sea were no sooner ended, than they were obliged to alter their measures^a.

The 29th of September I took my leave of Mr. J. Bosanquet, Mr. Hanbury, Mr. Thornton the deputy governor of

^a The Algerines finding the Spaniards meant to make war with them in good earnest, entered lately into a treaty with the Hamburgers, not of friendship only, but of commerce also. This the Spaniards highly resented, and put the Hamburgers under necessity of annulling that treaty, or of being excluded from their trade with Spain. Being reduced to this alternative they have chosen the former.

of the British company, and the other gentlemen, to whom I am much indebted for their great civility.

CHAP. II.

The author departs from Hamburg. A short account of the trade, inhabitants, and dome church of Bremen. He continues his journey through Westphalia.

THE 30th of September I departed from Hamburg. The ordinary rout to Amsterdam is directly to Osna-bruck; but my curiosity carried me to Bremen, not without some intention of going to Embden, if the weather had proved favourable. My rout then was to Blankenefs, two short German miles from Hamburg. The road being on the lofty banks of the Elbe, gives a most delightful and extensive view, as well of part of the Hanoverian dominions on the west, as of the Danish territories in Holstein on the east of that river. There is no regular stage for post horses to Blankenefs; the ferry also is very small for a wheel carriage, and if a proper season is not taken with regard to wind and tide, it may be dangerous. The rusticity of the Danish boors is apt to create vexation: it is their custom to spend some time on the shore at a certain game, to determine whose fortune it shall be to attend the passenger. The breadth of the river in this place is about an English mile, and near the same distance, up a creek to Crantz, a mean village in the Hanoverian dominions, where there is no regular post; yet the peasants are obliged to find horses for passengers at stated rates. Crantz, though so mean a place, is extended above two English miles, built on the top of a high bank, intended to resist the overflowing of the Elbe, which sometimes happens. A small branch of this river runs to Buxtehude, the next stage, which is about a German mile and a half: the country abounds in meadow and corn lands.

October the 1st, I pursued my journey to Closter-Seven, four long German miles, the road but indifferent; the prospect is mostly of woods and heath; the country is but thinly inhabited, and has not much corn land or cattle. From thence to Ottersberg is three German miles: here I found two companies of Hanoverian soldiers quartered. The soil hereabouts is infertile, being chiefly morasses. From thence to Bremen is three German miles, through a sandy country.

The

The land towards Bremen is more improved, but without any great face of fertility. We passed two turnpikes, and within an English mile of Bremen I observed three stones which are erected on the side of the road, with the arms of the British crown, denoting the confines of the Hanoverian dominion.

Bremen is situated on a plain on both sides of the river Weser, over which it has a bridge. The duchy in which it stands formerly belonged to the Swedes, but being conquered by the Danes, was by them sold to the elector of Hanover in 1716; yet there is only a small quarter of the town, in which stands the dome church, subject to that electorate, the rest with its territories, is free under its own laws and magistrates, who are composed of four burgo-masters and twenty four senators, chosen out of the citizens who profess Calvinism: this is the established religion, and they have five churches for the citizens of that persuasion.

The number of inhabitants are computed at 30,000, who appear to live in comfortable circumstances. The greatest part of the streets are narrow: the shops are well stocked with merchandize, and they have many houses of good appearance. They have a town house, an exchange, and waterworks, by which the city is supplied from the river. One would imagine that the people are extremely pious, *Soli Deo Gloria* being in large characters over their doors and windows, within doors and without.

In the market-place they shew the figure of a man in armour, who, as the people pretend, saved the city when it was in the utmost danger from the Swedes. They call it a Rowland, or Royland, from the name of a general who died in Italy in the service of the emperor, by whom this was made a free city. This general was of a remarkable stature; and the figure serves to keep up a sense of freedom, though under the burlesque form of a giant of about fourteen feet high.

But nothing is so remarkable in this place, as the great dome where their worship is performed after the Lutheran manner: the people of this persuasion bearing a great proportion to those of the established reformed church. It is an ancient building in the gothic manner, reputed to be about 600 years old. There is a vault under it, in which are the bodies of several persons, said to be deposited there above one hundred and fifty years ago, and first discovered about forty years since to be entire, as they yet remain. These bodies lye in the vault as one common grave; the
linen

linen in which they are drest is light as tinder : their skins look black and parched, but their features distinguishable ; they are extremely light, but the cohesion of the parts entire. The vault to appearance has nothing extraordinary, except that the air seems to be temperate, and the walls perfectly dry. It is about six feet below the surface of the earth, and vaulted eight or nine feet high. A dead cat, which has been accidentally thrown in through the window, has had the same fortune as the human bodies. They will not suffer the vault to be cleansed, from an idle opinion that it may lose its virtue. Several have offered considerable sums to have their bodies deposited there, which the priests object to, alledging the sentence of God, that man shall return to dust ; though it is more probable the magistrates do not chuse to indulge this idle vanity, as the Lutheran is not the established church.

Bremen, standing on the Weser but twelve German miles from the sea, would be as advantageously situated for trade as Hamburg, but that ships of burthen cannot come within two miles of the town, as there is often not above four feet water. This deficiency is supplied by boats, and does not hinder their building large fly boats at the town. Notwithstanding the neighbourhood of Hamburg, the trade here is considerable : they import a great quantity of sugar from France ; of the English they take tobacco, and other West India commodities, and also some of their manufactures. This city trades with Hanover, Saxony, Bohemia, &c. from whom they receive corn, linen, timber and minerals. They have fresh fish in plenty in some seasons, and are said to drest leather well.

Exceeding heavy rains having fallen, and the season becoming cold, I determined to make the best of my way to Amsterdam. From Bremen is a long causeway, the country being marshy, and soon covered with water. About a mile from the town we re-entered the Hanoverian dominions ; the soil near the road is mostly sandy or heath to Wildefhusen, which is three very long German miles : this is a principal town, and the residence of the great bailiff of the district, of which there are about twenty five in the Hanoverian dominions. Mr. Heineber the bailiff's son, who is a young man of great virtue, accomplishments, and excellent parts ^a, did me the favour of a visit, and invited me to his

^a Now preceptor for the German language and history to the young princes.

his father's house, which gave me an occasion of paying my respects to the bailiff.

The 2d I travelled on to Cloppenberg, three long German miles, the road very sandy. This is a mean town in the dominion of the bishop of Munster, elector of Cologne; but the country round it is pleasant, being composed of arable and meadow lands, bordered by groves and plantations.

The 3d I went on to Loenningen; the distance is nominally two German miles, but here they seem to be double, and the peasants are paid near twice the common price, with this inconvenience, that instead of one postilion I was obliged to take two peasants for four horses. It has sometimes been the fortune of travellers in this country, to have as many men to attend them, as horses to draw their vehicle.

Loenningen is a mean dirty place, but the country near it pleasant and fertile. The government of these ecclesiastical princes does not seem to establish charity or politeness; at least I found the people insolent and given to extortion.

From thence to Hasselune is accounted two German miles; the country is very sandy. This is a more agreeable town, and has a small garrison of troops belonging to the elector of Cologne. Poverty seemed to prevail here; but superstition still more, in consequence of that ecclesiastical power which had erected crucifixes almost on every hillock.

The next town is Lingen, at the distance of two long German miles; the road to it is sandy, but the adjacent country pleasant. This place, which is in the circle of Westphalia, is subject to the king of Prussia: it stands on the river Ems, and has a fortification of some small consideration. The cleanness, breadth, and good pavement of its streets, and regular built houses, give one the more striking idea of that good order for which the Prussians are so much distinguished. This town indeed formerly belonged to king William III. and devolved to the house of Brandenburg on his death. It partakes much of Dutch œconomy: here the exorbitant price of near a ducat a German mile for horses was first charged to me.

C H A P. III.

Observations at Almello, Daventer, &c. Reflections on the produce of tobacco. A short account of Amersfort and Naarden.

THE 4th of October I advanced two long German miles, towards the dominions of the united provinces, and arrived at Northorn, where I observed the women appear to be almost blinded with the smoak arising from the turf, which they have here in great abundance: Most of the country over which I travelled from Loenningen produces nothing else.

It was now the season in which the states order the rates of post horses to be increased about one third part more than it is from April to September: I was obliged to pay 18 guilders to Almello, which is computed four German miles; but, in consideration of the roads, they gave me six horses. The little towns I now passed through began to exhibit that cleanliness for which the Hollanders are so much distinguished. The marriages of this country are performed with a humorous solemnity: I observed pillars and festoons of verdure, adorned with garlands and flowers, which are prepared for the decoration of a nuptial feast at the houses of the parties.

The heaths reserved for the production of turf on this side of the country, are much larger than is generally imagined, considering the small extent of the dominion of the United Provinces; but except these the hand of industry appears in a very remarkable degree; the inclosure of meadows, corn land and kitchen gardens, plantation of trees and banks, which are thrown up for roads, at the same time that they demonstrate the labour of the peasant, afford an agreeable prospect. Most of their cows are red, and these are the chief riches of this part of the country, by the great quantity of butter and cheese which they produce, and in this season they feed them on an herb they call Spersen, which grows six or eight inches high.

Almello is a neat town in the province of Overijssel, where there is a manufactory of fine holland: the greatest part of what we commonly call by this name is made in Silesia, and only bleached in the United Provinces. The preference which I thought due to the manufactures of my own country, prevented my making any purchase in Almello.

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The improvements we have made both in Scotland and Ireland, are such as will, I hope, in a small number of years gratify the most luxurious, as well as afford a quantity for a considerable exportation to foreign markets.

The 5th I set out for Daventer; the road for the most part is through marshes and heath, with a ridge of hills to the north. Haslen appears to the south-west about two English miles from the common road; some make it their way, though it is half a league about. They generally reckon here by the hours, as in Asia, and compute two hours to a German mile; this computation is hardly too much when the roads are bad. From Northorn to Daventer they compute four German miles.

Daventer is a large city in the province of Overijssel, formerly a hanse town, but now subject to the states. It stands on the river Yssel, which bears vessels of burthen. There is a large bridge of wood over it, for the passage of which they pay a heavy toll. This river runs into the Zuyder sea. The town is well fortified, and has a strong garrison; the streets and houses are very neat, and the shops well supplied with manufactures and other necessaries. It has a pretty large inland trade, but no manufactures.

From hence is a regular post, four German miles to Voorthusen; the soil of the country is various; near the midway is Loo a famous seat of the prince of Orange. Voorthusen is a village of very little note; nor has the country an agreeable aspect. The 6th, I proceeded to Amersfort, two German miles, the first of which is through a sandy country, and one sees but little cultivated land, or appearance of rich inhabitants; but towards Oувелach the country appears worthy the reputation it has in the world. There are large plantations of tobacco; for the production of which the land is thrown up into ridges of about two feet high. The consumption of this article in the United Provinces is very considerable, and by some pretended to be necessary in so moist a climate. It may be questioned however whether the lives of the inhabitants are prolonged by it; or whether the same labour and expence which is employed about it, would not produce provision for the support of life more effectually, and for greater numbers of people: for it seems inconsistent with reason that so many thousands, I might say millions of people in the different quarters of the world, should be employed in cultivating this herb, whilst such multitudes are suffering distress for want of the common provisions of life.

Amersfort is an antient and considerable town in the province of Utrecht, on the small river Eems, which runs to the Zuyder sea. There is a very large church, and an excellent set of chimes, for which the United Provinces are very remarkable; those of this town play every hour on market days from ten till twelve in the morning. This affords a cheap and agreeable amusement to the common people, and some pleasure to those in higher life who delight in music. I was struck with the neatness and cleanliness of the streets and houses; but the manners of the people are not equally delicate: a certain rusticity prevails, which is sometimes shewn in an apparent contempt of strangers. This town is chiefly supported by husbandry, and has a considerable trade in tobacco of its own growth. I observed many of the people wear wooden shoes, which are indeed best calculated for their brick floors, and incessant washing.

From Amersfort I departed for Naarden, which is about two German miles distant; the turnpikes are very numerous, where passengers pay regularly, though there is no fence in many places. About two English miles from Amersfort is Soesdyke, a palace belonging to the prince of Orange, which has a park said to be near eight English miles in circumference. Being impatient to get early to Amsterdam, I declined visiting Utrecht, remarkable for that treaty which has blotted the annals of England, and aggrandized the house of Bourbon, as appeared too plain in the late war. Utrecht is said to be one of the most agreeable places, and as worthy the attention of a traveller as any in the United Provinces.

The road to Naarden is pleasant, abounding in regular plantations of trees; and the country is well cultivated and inhabited. Naarden is a boundary of the province of Holland, at a small distance from the Zuyder sea: the fortification is considerable, being partly composed of a broad double mote filled from the sea, which has often made inroads upon it. In antient wars it was often sacked, and in 1486 reduced to ashes by fire. Here also the Spaniards massacred the inhabitants upon the occasion of the revolt of the United Provinces. In 1672 it was taken by the French, but soon retaken by the prince of Orange.

From Naarden to Amsterdam is reckoned two German miles; the whole country consists of pasture lands and gardens, below the surface of the sea, if one may judge from the appearances of the bodies of ships on the water. The road

road on the banks of the canals is made with great cost, so that there are no less than seven tolls, at which I paid three guilders. The avenue to Amsterdam is a causeway, on the sides of which, near the city, are small villages and gardens belonging to the citizens, which serve to beautify the face of this artificial country. The gates of Amsterdam are shut at six in the evening, but there is admittance till ten, for a toll of one stiver each person. According to the ordinary computation I had travelled only forty one German miles and a half from Hamburg. By the way of Osnabruck it is reckoned fifty two German miles, but the difference is rather in the computation of the miles than the real distance.

C H A P. IV.

Reflections on the commercial genius of the Dutch. A brief description of Amsterdam. Of the dykes in Holland. Of the taxes and revenues of the United Provinces compared with those of Great Britain.

THE correspondence which I had as a merchant, procured me acquaintances in Amsterdam, of the want of which, foreigners, who are not interested in commerce, generally complain. Indeed of all the great cities which I have yet seen, this seems to afford the least entertainment, to those whose heads and hearts are not intirely turned to pecuniary acquisitions: here every moment seems to be filled up in the pursuit of trade, with all its various and extended connections. The people have no time to complain of a bad climate, bad weather, or the want of health: they have hardly leisure to perform the common duties of hospitality and benevolence.

The observation I made of the inhabitants of Amsterdam, corresponds exactly with what has been often remarked, that those disorders of the mind, particularly that of being seldom contented for any length of time, which seem to be the more peculiar affliction of my own country, where the people are more refined in manners and sentiments, are hardly known in this city, verifying the maxim, that the turn of men's minds constitutes their felicity, much more than their fortunes or external circumstances.

In allusion to this subject, Sir William Temple observes, " This is a disease too refined for this country and people ;

“ who are well, when they are not ill, and pleased when
“ they are not troubled; are content because they think
“ little of it; and seek their happiness in the common ease
“ and commodities of life, or the increase of riches; not
“ amusing themselves with the more speculative contrivance
“ of passion, or refinements of pleasure.”

The principal houses of business in this great metropolis of the Netherlands, among several others, are those of messieurs Hopes, messieurs Cliffords, and messieurs Muilmans, with whom I had particular connections, and from whom I received great marks of hospitality and politeness. Mr. Thomas Hope did me the favour of a visit immediately on my arrival. This gentleman is no less distinguished for the great skill and industry, and extensive business by which he has acquired a large fortune, than from his ingenuousness and abilities, which set him at the head of the West India company, as the deputy of the prince of Orange. Messieurs Cliffords, who are related to the noble family of that name in England, have, by an extensive correspondence through a long series of years, acquired a very considerable fortune; and for their probity and politeness are much respected by all who have any connexion with them. Messieurs Muilmans are well known in London, from the residence of two of the brothers, who are very eminent merchants in that city. Their father and brothers in Amsterdam are also distinguished for their wealth, and for the share they have in the government of the United Provinces.

This wonderful city of Amsterdam, as well as many other towns of the Netherlands, is certainly a work of art and labour, not inferior to the greatest monuments of human industry in past ages. It is about 220 English miles from London: its proper name as derived from the river Amstel, is Amsteldam, i. e. the dam of the Amstel, which is the name generally given to it in authentic records. From its earliest beginning they reckon about 400 years; and 270 from its being inclosed with walls. It was not till the year 1570, that the Dutch began to lay the foundation of their prodigious riches and naval strength. About 20 years before this time they were provoked by the oppressive measures of Romish bigotry, to shake off the Spanish yoke, and adopt the doctrine of Calvin. The Spaniards exerted themselves, upon this occasion, upon religious, as well as political principles; but it was not in their power to render that confederacy abortive, which at length united the seven provinces,

provinces, and, forming a powerful republic, gave a just occasion to this motto ; “ *Concordia res parvæ crescunt.*”

About the year 1600, the love of liberty and gain occasioned such a conflux of people, that the walls of the city were extended ; since that time they have had further enlargements, the whole now making about three leagues in circumference. Her greatest strength is in the difficulty of access both by sea and land ; yet have not the numerous shoals, which render the entrance of the Texel so difficult, obstructed the progress of her commerce. One striking proof of œconomy is very obvious, even in the fortifications of this city ; for the bastions, which are very numerous, have each a windmill on them.

The streets are, for the most part, extremely clean ; but except those which have canals, much too narrow for beauty or convenience. They are rendered the less disagreeable, as the hired coaches are set on sledges, drawn by one horse, which do not greatly incommode passengers. Merchandize is also drawn on sledges. These are not only the most convenient vehicles for the inhabitants and their trade, but also calculated to preserve their houses, which being built on piles, might in a length of time, be much damaged in their foundations by means of a great number of wheel-carriages. The coaches of gentlemen are however for the most part set on wheels ; but they pay a considerable tax for this liberty. The principal streets, or rather quays of the canals are agreeable, particularly the Keyzargraft and Heeregraft, which are planted on each side with trees ; but the canals sometimes throw up a very offensive stench. The people are not at a loss how to account for this inconveniency : something is owing to nature ; but it is apparent, that the discipline of the state is relaxed by the canals not being kept so clean as the regulations require : these canals, in some parts, are of a considerable breadth.

The houses in Amsterdam are rather neat than elegant, or commodious : the nature of the climate renders it necessary to wash them often ; but the greatest part of the people carry their cleanliness in this way so far, as hardly to afford themselves time for the necessary care of their persons. The same humour prevails amongst them, as with some of middling fortunes in England ; they shut themselves out of their own houses, by keeping the most useful and agreeable apartment for the entertainment of their friends on particular occasions, that is, for vanity.

The entrance of their houses is generally by stairs four or five feet from the ground, and the passage into the rooms, which run very deep, is floored and panneled with marble, which has an air of grandeur in miniature. They have much neat, and some rich furniture; but it does not seem to be the effect of a luxurious and expensive taste, so much as the observance of an antient custom of neatness and elegance. At the worst it may plead its being less dangerous to a state, than the constant expence of a table, equipage, or amusement; and these are not countenanced in Amsterdam in any remarkable degree.

This city is generally esteemed one third as populous as London and Paris. They reckon within the walls, twenty-six thousand five hundred houses, and about two hundred and forty thousand inhabitants: the suburbs, though small, must add to this number.

The grand rendezvous of the merchants of this metropolis, as in other great trading cities, is the exchange, which was finished in 1613. The interior part is 250 feet long, and 140 broad; but much inferior in architecture and embellishment to that of London. It is supported by forty-six pillars, which are marked with numbers; and the merchants take their stands near particular pillars, to be found the more easily. The city of Amsterdam is guarded by a militia, as the safest and most proper defence of their wealth and liberty; these are all burghers, and consequently no objects of jealousy, nor do they cause any considerable expence.

With regard to the several religions of the inhabitants; here is great freedom, so long as the priests avoid disturbing the repose of the state. The established faith is that of Calvin, for which there are eleven churches for the Dutch, one for the English, two for the Germans, and two for the French. The Roman catholics are said to have near thirty places of worship, of which some are chapels, and others, apartments in houses fitted for that purpose. Besides these, there are Lutherans and Anabaptists: the Jews also are in no small number, and have their synagogues as in London. But of all these different religions, none but the Calvinists are allowed the use of bells. The states very cautiously preserve their supremacy, by invalidating all marriages not made according to the rites of the established church, unless the parties first engage themselves in form before the civil magistrate; and when that is done, they may perform the ceremonies of their respective religions as they think proper,
Nothing

Nothing adds more to the beauty of this city, as well as of the country in general, than the plantations of trees for the public use and pleasure; an inclination which seems to prevail very much, and is highly worthy of imitation. In England things of this sort are often done; but more for private gratification, than the general delight of the people; so that the lower classes are the more apt to crowd to gardens, where they pay their money, waste their time, and sometimes debauch themselves with excesses. We may observe however, to the honour of Great Britain, that within these thirty years, great improvements have been made in many parts of the kingdom: works of this nature for the public recreation,^b are certainly worthy of the best citizens, the most zealous patriots, and greatest princes.

The Dutch are distinguished for the number and economy of their useful charities, which seem to exceed those of England; not in extent; for in beneficence, the English have hardly any bounds, as if they meant in good earnest to "cover a multitude of sins;" but in regard to discipline and wholesome severity, we have not supported it so well as the Dutch, who make all their poor perform some useful labour. It does not indeed seem possible to engage the lowest sort of the people, of any nation, to work from a mere sense of duty. If they are left to their choice, or the materials of labour withheld from them, can it be expected they will work? But if the make and constitution of man renders labour necessary to his support; I presume it follows, that he who can work, and will not, should not have food given him. Charities founded on principles not consistent with this rule, instead of drawing down blessings, produce calamities, as is often experienced.

With regard to their dykes, the Dutch have made vast improvements since the year when the worms made great havock in their piles: they now line many of their shores with very large stones, and have carried this work on with great success. I observed the dyke^c to the Zuyder-Sea is raised above sixteen feet perpendicular, and goes off upon an easy decline. The stones are regularly laid, and form

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^b For instance, St. James's park contributes greatly to the health and pleasure of the inhabitants of London. ^c As this word in English signifies a very different thing from the sense in which it is used here, it may easily deceive those who have not seen the dykes in Holland; the Dutch call it dijk, which properly signifies a bank.

an excellent defence against the water. They bring these stones from Norway: The government pays seven gilders^c a ton for any quantity that is brought; so that when masters have no better employment for their vessels, they make a voyage to Norway for this purpose. The work intended to be compleated in this manner, is of such extent, as may yet require the labour of eight or ten years: it will, to all appearance, be not only a great saving, but also a security to the state. The dykes towards the north sea are said to be more lofty, and not to be supported but with piles at a great expence.

Even a dreadful vulcano cannot render the situation of the neighbouring inhabitants so precarious, as that of the Dutch from the nature of their country. By great skill and industry they have indeed given laws to the ocean; but it has, upon some occasions, past its bounds, and exhibited a lively picture of that deluge, in which the whole race of mankind was once involved, a single family excepted. In 1530 a great part of Zealand was overflowed: in 1568 no less than seventy-two villages on the coasts of Holland and Friesland were swallowed up, and near twenty thousand people perished. Those who escaped on trees and rising grounds, after suffering much with hunger, were relieved by the care of the magistrates. The inundation of November 1665, drove in the sea with violence hardly to be conceived: it broke down the dyke of Muydenberg, and laid the whole country round Naarden, and many places in the province of Utrecht under water. The dyke between Amsterdam and Harlem was also broke, and many others, too tedious to enumerate. Notwithstanding these great mischiefs, the storms no sooner ceased, than the industry of the inhabitants repaired, in a great measure, the havock created by them.

The accidents which are common to a flat country in being overflowed with water at certain seasons of the year, do not seem to be much regarded here, as provision is made against them by housing their cattle. These also render their meadow-lands the more fertile; and when the waters are frozen, which generally happens in the winter season, it furnishes them the amusement of skeiting. What contributes also to the safety of this country is, that they can lay it under water when they please; yet does not this prevent

^c Thirteen shillings.

vent the terrors of the people in regard to French armies, much less render it healthy or agreeable.

The province of Holland is said to pay half the tax of the whole seven, and Amsterdam half ^d of the province of Holland; from whence we must conclude, that there are immense riches in Amsterdam, or no great wealth in the seven provinces. The revenues of Amsterdam are reported to be a million sterling; and consequently the whole must be four millions; which, I apprehend, greatly exceeds the reality, or it is meant only in time of war. Sir William Temple estimates their ordinary revenues in his time at twenty-one millions of guilders^e; but he says the revenues of the province of Holland, including Amsterdam, were reported to be one million six hundred thousand pounds, which brings the whole to three millions two hundred thousand pounds: most calculators have made it three millions; but as things are circumstanced at present, we must not, I think, compute it above two millions of English money.

In 1665 they raised 40 millions of guilders^f, and of these, the province of Holland only, paid twenty-two millions; which is nearly correspondent with the account they now give of the proportion this province bears to all the others, as already mentioned.

It may be worth the enquiry of the curious, how vastly the taxes in the United Provinces exceed those of Great Britain, in proportion to the number of inhabitants. They generally calculate two millions^g of people in the United Provinces; and two millions at the lowest computation are annually paid in taxes: now as we compute eight millions of people, if we were to pay in proportion, our taxes should be eight millions; but I believe they are not six. The United Provinces are reckoned to contain only 7500 square miles; whereas England has 49,450 square miles; consequently these Provinces are six times as populous as England. How industry flourishes among them is apparent, even if they pay but two millions; since considering the goodness, and extent of our country, and the barrenness of theirs, we may suppose ourselves capable of paying six times as much in taxes as they; whereas we pay but three times, as above-mentioned.

^d Some call it three-eighths; but I believe half is nearest the truth. ^e 1,920,000 l. ^f 3,820,000 l. ^g The Dutch say there are not above 80,000 inhabitants in all Zealand and a million in Holland; so that the other five Provinces have 920,000.

mentioned. The truth is, they acquire riches by the sea in a double capacity, that is, by commerce and fishery; and we may conclude, from this general view, of what great consequence their fishing is to them, of which I shall make further mention in its place.

C H A P. V.

An account of the trade of the United Provinces. A short description of the stadthouse. Observations on the bank of Amsterdam, compared with that of London.

FROM the consideration of the revenues of these Provinces, the most familiar transition is to their trade; and here we find numerous causes coinciding to raise the commerce of this country to so prodigious a height. The original of this is so familiar to most persons, as to need very little animadversion. Sir William Temple mentions the subject in these terms: "Holland has not grown rich by
 " any native commodities, but by force of industry, by
 " improvement and manufacture of all foreign growths,
 " by being the general magazine of Europe, and furnishing
 " all parts with whatever the market wants, or invites, and
 " by their seamen being, as they have properly been called,
 " the common carriers of the world."

The trade of this city was raised chiefly on the ruins of Antwerp, once the mistress of the commercial world, till the fiery zeal of priests, and the insolence of military authority, trampled equally upon the laws of justice and humanity; and, lastly, upon commerce, the support of nations. Towards the close of the 16th century, the Portuguese also, from being the greatest traders to the East, their commerce began to decline; which gave the more room to this new colony of merchants, who had many of the requisites to carry trade to its highest pitch, though their country does not produce one single material for building ships.

The same reasons which I have assigned for the decline of the trade of Hamburg, may also be given for the present diminution of the commerce of the United Provinces; for in proportion to the flow in some countries, it is likely to ebb in others. But to these reasons we may also add, that the increase of riches in the united Provinces has contributed to a corruption of manners among the people, and slackened the

the reins of that discipline by which they acquired their wealth. According to Sir William Temple, the Dutch had but little foreign trade, except that to the Indies, till 1670; and, in few years after this time, the same author observes, that they began to indulge in an expensive way of life, which made their rulers think, that sumptuary laws were necessary.

But to consider things as they yet stand; Amsterdam is a prodigious magazine of timber, corn, wine, and many other commodities of foreign European production. The inhabitants excel in dying, sugar-baking, bleaching of linen and wax, manufacturing of paper and sail-cloth, with no inconsiderable quantity of silk and wool. Their whale-fishery generally produces great riches, and their East-India trade is of the highest importance to them both in Europe and Asia: the article of spices only is a mine of gold, which they have preserved with more care and assiduity, than if it had been really such. Here are also great repositories of gold and silver, precious stones and choice drugs, from different parts of the world.

In regard to the balance of trade between Great Britain and the United Provinces, the linens, flax, sail-cloth, tiles, juniper-berries, &c. which this nation takes of the Dutch, much exceed in value the lead, tin, tobacco and coals, which they take of the British subjects.

I must not forget that their herring fishery is a source of riches, as it employs so great a number of hands^h. Persons of every age and denomination delight in this sort of food: there is hardly a family in the United Provinces but consumes a barrel. The quantities which they send to foreign markets and convert into money, is also an object of some consequence: in whatever light we consider this fishery, it is of the greatest value to them. One would imagine that the happy situation of the British subjects rendered this trade unnecessary; at least I do not find that they ever did enjoy it in any considerable degree. King James I. had this business under consideration, as appears by the ambassador

^h In 1601 they had 1500 busses, of twenty-five to thirty tons, with a great number of small vessels. In 1618 it was represented to king James, that the Dutch employed 3000 ships and boats, and 15000 men in this fishery. Their barrels usually weigh three hundred weight, containing each about 1000 herrings. It is also worth observing, that the French, of late years, have made a prodigious progress in the herring-fishery near the English coast.

sador Carlton's letter, dated February 1618, from the Hague, which gives us an idea how things were circumstanced at that time. As the British nation is now making fresh endeavours to establish this fishery, I will venture to insert the following short extract of the letter above-mentioned, viz.

" I find likewise in the manner of proceeding, that treating
 " by way of proposition here, nothing can be expected but
 " their wonted dilatory and evasive answers; their manner
 " being to refer such propositions from the States General to
 " the States of Holland. The States of Holland take advice
 " of a certain council residing at Delft, which they call the
 " council of Fishery. From them such an answer commonly comes, as may be expected from such an oracle.
 " The way therefore (under correction) to effect your majesty's intent, is to begin with the fishers themselves, by
 " publishing against the time of their going out, your resolution at what distance you will permit them to fish,
 " whereby they will have recourse to their council of
 " fishery; that council to the States of Holland, and those
 " of Holland to the States General, who then, in place of
 " being sought unto, will, for contentment of their subjects, seek unto your majesty."

In the time of king Charles II. we also find great resentments of the Dutch towards the English nation; the latter complaining at the same time of their own indolence with regard to the herring fishery. The learned Selden maintained the argument of our exclusive right to fish, in a treatise intitled, *Mare clausum*; whilst Grotius, in behalf of the Dutch, pleads for a *Mare liberum*: which of the two is right, is not my business at present to enquire.

It was long imagined that the British nation declined all attempts on this fishery from a particular desire of shewing the highest regard to her good friends and allies the Dutch; but whatever their virtues are, or our singular obligations to them, they must be sensible either of our folly in submitting, our incapacity of hindering, or our justice in acquiescing. The Hollanders depend so much on fish for their support, that it would seem a system of politics grating to humanity, to use the means which providence has put in our hands, to prevent their drawing such supplies from the sea; but we are also led by no less a motive than self-preservation, and the duty we owe to our own poor, to provide for the means of their support.

It is doubted by some, whether the erection of work-houses, without finding new work for the poor, will fully answer the purposes of the nation; but nothing can be more evident than that the fishery, supposing it succeeds, will produce an increase in our shipping, an additional manufactory in nets, and in general an employment entirely new, and of such an extent, as may in time take in a great number of the poor of Great Britain, men, women and children, old and young; for they can all perform some part or other. It ought to be presumed that the gentlemen who have undertaken the care of this fishery, will endeavour to surprize the nation with the success, answer the good intention of the legislature, and convince the world that constancy and perseverance can do any thing except miracles. We should likewise consider, that this fishery, which is properly British, ought to be employed to the advantage of Great Britain, if it is practicable, as I presume it is. It is at least well deserving the attention shewn it, and the event can be known only by time. There seems to be no contradiction in the nature of the thing why it should not do; and if we determine under providence that it shall succeed, more than half the event is secured.

To return to what more immediately concerns the Dutch; passing over the Y¹ to Sardam^k, I had an opportunity of observing what vast labour they execute by means of wind-mills. Here they saw timber at a very easy rate^l, which occasions their building ships cheaper than in other parts. They grind woods, and other materials for dyeing, make gunpowder, and paper, of which here are the best manufactories of any in Holland. These mills are employed in many other uses. This work is performed by very few hands, and the women are employed as well as the men; which gives one a strong idea of that industry and œconomy from whence the riches of the United Provinces arise. There are other scenes where the people are not less active. Many of these windmills cost considerable sums of money, the foundation of them being made in a very expensive manner, as the ground is little better than a marsh.

Of all the public buildings in Amsterdam, either for use or ornament, the town house^m is the most distinguished: the

¹ Called also the Ye, and by some the Ya, about five miles over.

^k The proper name of this place is Sandam:

^l I observed a tree of eight or nine inches diameter sawed into thirty-six boards, with great exactness.

^m Stadt-house.

the foundations of it were laid in 1648, and in seven years the building was so far advanced, that the magistrates took their seats in it. The Latin inscription on a black marble pedestal, the representation of which constitutes part of the subject of a relieve, is to this purpose :

“ The United Provinces of the Low Countries, after
 “ having supported a bloody war by sea and land in every
 “ region of the earth, against the three Philips, most powerful
 “ kings of Spain, for more than 80 years, and by that
 “ means secured their liberty, and the exercise of their religion,
 “ the most honourable burgomasters.

“ GERBRANT PANCRAS,

“ JAQUES DE GRAAF,

“ SYBRANT VALKENIER, and

“ PIETER SCHAAP,

“ made the peace in their magistracy in 1648, their sons
 “ and relations laying the first stone of this town house,
 “ the 4th of November of the same year.”

The dimensions of this building are 282 feet in front, 232 deep, and 116 high, exclusive of the cupola. It cost three millions of guilders *, when money was more valuable than it is now : this may be the more easily reconciled, if we consider that no less than 13,000 large piles were driven to make a foundation for this ponderous burthen. *Whether in this sum they include all the plafonds, and other paintings, of which here are some very valuable, is not essential to our present purpose.* Behind the seat of the presiding burgomaster is a complimentary inscription in Dutch verse, wrote by C. Huygens, one of their most eminent poets, which seems to argue the sense they had of the secure establishment of the state at that time.

To give a minute description of this edifice, would require more labour and observation than I had inclination or leisure to bestow on it. We may consider it as a very grand and useful building, but not elegant nor agreeable. It contains most of the offices and tribunals, for the execution of the laws, in the several branches of the military as well as civil government.

It is constantly remarked by foreigners, that the entrance of this building is very mean, and not worthy the other parts of the structure ; the reason assigned for this is, that in consulting the strength and usefulness of this work, the architect purposely neglected the beauty of it. Had the doors
 been

been proportioned, they would have been more subject to be forced, upon occasion of those tumultuous assemblies of people, which are not unfrequent in this countryⁿ. The stadthouse is guarded during the night by a body of the burghers, who are thus charged with the care of the great reservoir of the wealth of the United Provinces. In the lower apartments of this building is the bank, in which are supposed to be deposited immense treasures: the keys of them are deposited in the hands of the four regent burgomasters. Some report that these treasures amount to three hundred tuns of gold; and those who have faith enough to think it true, have this to say, that the value of so much gold is not above thirty two millions sterling; and the debt of the United Provinces is yet larger, as I shall have occasion to mention hereafter. The real sum here deposited, is perhaps not known to any one person living; and even the computation in the gross, except such as I have already mentioned, is kept as an impenetrable secret; and no doubt there are many good reasons why it ought to be so^o.

The notion of credit supports a great part of the commercial interest of mankind; as it had its original foundation in reality, the business of the world is carried on by means of it, perhaps as well as if that reality still existed. How long this fashion will last, I will not presume to foretell, probably as long as national faith. Banks are maintained upon a certain principle of social confidence; perhaps not so much from any good opinion which men have of each other's justice, as from a mutual tie of interest, and to prevent that distress which might follow, should the knot be once untied.

The bank of Amsterdam differs very much from that of London. In the first all the cash is lodged without paying
any

ⁿ In 1525 the anabaptists formed a conspiracy, and 600 men, during the night, forced the town-house. A burgher took the precaution to cut the ropes of the bells, by which means he prevented the alarm from spreading and the rebels from strengthening their numbers; so that the next day they were taken in the town-house, and put to death. In 1535 the fanatics raised another commotion, and ran naked into the streets, men and women, intending by dreadful cries to intimidate the inhabitants, and seize on the town-house; but this piece of extravagant folly ended only in the chastisement of several of the promoters of it.

^o They say king William III. was once questioned on that subject, by one who perhaps was not distinguished for his understanding. This prince answered, "Can you keep a secret?"

any interest; in the last, as great sums are acknowledged to be lent to the government, which pays interest; that interest is again paid to the proprietors of the stock.

As the bank of Amsterdam receives only the best and purest coin or bullion; the bank-money, as properly denominated, bears a premium of four or five per cent. more than the current money. If a man is desirous to realize his estate, he sells his bank money for current money, with greater facility than we sell bank stock. Here they make payments after the manner of the bank of Venice^p, viz. by transfer in the books of the bank from the credit of one to the credit of another: these transfers are made by the personal appearance of the transferer; by his order for which there are printed forms; or by virtue of his power of attorney. No coin or specie whatsoever, when once delivered into the bank, is paid out again, unless in cases of deposits, where the identical gold or silver is reclaimed by him who delivered it in, and for that purpose he has a permit, renewable every six months, otherwise to become invalid; in the last case the cash or bullion so delivered, is blended with the common stock, and transferable only in the manner already mentioned. The accounts which are kept by the bank are remarkably regular and true, which is indeed the more essential as here are no bank-notes; so that the merchant or other creditor, has only to confer occasionally, in order to see that his accounts agree with those of the bank books. Tho' this bank pays no interest, yet it receives interest for the sums lent to the East and West India companies; so that these companies trade, in some measure, for account of the state. The city is thus connected with the bank, as being so immediately under the direction of the chief burgo-masters; so it is also bound for the Lombard^q, where monies are lent on the security of all kinds of merchandize at a low interest.

The large sums of money which have been lent to the Dutch government, are independent of this bank; the revenues of the respective provinces being engaged as a security for sums, and for which they give bonds. These debts have been made into a stock, which bearing a reasonable interest, was at first above par; but that stock being taxed, or more properly the interest reduced, and not always paid
in

^p The bank of Venice is the more antient of the two, and probably served as a model to this of Amsterdam.

^q Lembaert, as denominated by the Dutch.

in a punctual manner, the principal is fallen under par. This being considered as a kind of violation of national faith, necessarily sinks the credit of the state.

Though the public interest in Great Britain is also reduced, it is not felt in this manner; on the contrary, the principal stock, which is a token of great property, is lately much encreased in value; whilst the Dutch are obliged to submit, not only to the reduction of interest, but also to the diminution of the value of the principal.

With regard to the government of Amsterdam, the subject has been exhausted by other writers. I will only take notice that there are twelve burgomasters who change by rotation, and of these, four are regents annually, one of the former year always remaining. Proper officers are appointed to attend these burgomasters, who are in most respects of very great weight, as the chief directors in this popular government. As the senate has the legislative, the burgomasters have, for the most part, the executive power; and their influence is necessarily the cause of their being held in the highest veneration. The original frame of this government seems to have been founded in the inclinations of the common people, and their rulers elected by their suffrage; but as liberty in low minds is naturally apt to breed licentiousness, and consequently to destroy itself; it was, in process of time, found necessary to confine those elections to particular bodies; that is in fact for the magistrates to choose themselves: this also has produced its evils, and occasioned jealousies and tumults, to which we may add, instability, and consequently the insecurity of the state.

Before I take my leave of Amsterdam, I must observe to the honour of the Dutch, that as they acknowledge themselves to be a colony of merchants; and that civil government is essential to trade; they do not think the civil offices contemptible; nor do persons of high rank, from indolence, or false delicacy, decline these offices, and leave them to the inferior inhabitants. It might be wished that London, whose chief glory is her trade, paid the same regard to the offices of civil œconomy: it is true, some of the most considerable citizens have lately taken the virtuous resolution of serving the community in this essential point; and it may be hoped that others will follow their example.

C H A P. VI.

Comparison of the debt of the United Provinces with that of Great-Britain. The situation of British subjects in regard to their debt. The reduction of national interest. Moral reflections on the motives to œconomy.

FROM the consideration of the enormous debt of the United Provinces, and the present condition of the Dutch, the transition is natural to that of my own country. The circumstances of Great-Britain are incomparably better than those of the United Provinces; the immoveable estate of the latter is not computed one fortieth part so good as ours, though their debt, at the lowest computation, is said to be half as great, and before the late war was near equal ^a. It is remarkable that, in order to save their money, the Dutch plead poverty, and report their debt to be rather greater, than some apprehend it really to be. However, I think it will appear to the inquisitive world, that in regard to venality, and the want of public love, the people of the United Provinces exceed those of Great Britain. Whether I am partial to my own country, and that the test of this opinion will depend on which nation falls first, we must leave to futurity.

The dangerous power exercised amongst the Dutch, was demonstrated by the conduct of their rulers in the late war, and again by the occasional tumults of the common people: it is still a dangerous exercise of power, whether a mob or a magistrate governs without law? But in any case, that state would hardly submit to a sponge without a civil commotion: an attempt to wipe off their debt would probably involve them in a greater distress, than the heavy contributions of the opulent, which are necessary for the relief of it.

At the close of king William's war the province of Holland was engaged only for 60 millions of guilders ^b. It was in this reign that Great-Britain began to contract debts. I know not if it is worth the pains to examine, how we came to be so deep in debt, unless that enquiry can diminish it: perhaps the rapid progress of this necessary evil is owing to the ambition of the house of Bourbon, which has been the occasion

^a Four hundred millions of florins, or near forty millions sterling.

^b 6,000,000 l.

casion of expensive wars. We know that the ambition of that very house has involved France in the same difficulty, perhaps in no less a degree; whilst property in an arbitrary government cannot be so secure as it is in a free state: consequently the people of France are so far in a worse condition, in respect to the debt of their government, than the British subjects. But may we impute this accident with regard to ourselves, to the facility with which necessities or expences are created, when men know where there is a fund to supply them; or to a corruption of manners, and the profuse luxuries, which are become fashionable? Be this as it may, it must be obvious to every dispassionate enquirer, that the encrease of property by trade, is a concomitant cause of the encrease of the national debt in Great-Britain.

We find political writers differ very much in their sentiments; and, from the comparison of the past and present times, draw very different conclusions: this must necessarily happen, whenever we compare things, which are not the proper object of comparison. It is very plain, that, before the revolution, the British nation was not incumbered with a debt: it is now deeply immersed, and engaged to pay a very large sum annually in interest; and yet, I hope, no one will doubt, that Great Britain is at least as rich and powerful a nation now as it was then. The œconomy of the state and of the people must consequently have taken a very different turn. Our wars have been more expensive, because honesty and national love have been less in fashion*. Perhaps, with more œconomy, we might have saved a considerable quantity of coin and bullion, which have been sent out of the nation: but all this time it ought to be remembered, that such coin and bullion is but a small part of our riches. I know not what computation is made of the ex-

* To what other cause can we impute our wars being more expensive now than they were formerly? The value of things is not increased beyond the proportion of the increase of riches. As we are now better able to pay a tax of six millions, than formerly of three or four; if that which cost only three or four, is now worth six, there is no greater occasion to make war more expensive, in proportion to our revenues, now, than there was then: unless we come back to the same argument, that the formidable efforts of France have put us under a necessity of preparing greater fleets and armies than formerly. It would be very well if we could prove from thence, that the public is treated at present with as great respect as ever it was.

port of it on the account of war; but I question if the whole value of the coin and bullion now in the nation amounts to four per cent. on our national stock.

Wars, though they are the chastisements of heaven, are also great incentives to industry, and create a more diffusive circulation of money. The same industry and circulation, are among others, great causes of the accumulation of our national debt; and this debt has also created a more extensive accumulation of property^d: these seem to have acted reciprocally on each other; whilst the nation, as I just observed, has certainly acquired a great encrease in riches by the general balance of her trade.

Hence it arises that so much money is brought to market to be disposed of to the government upon very easy terms. Nothing can be plainer than this, that if we were to lose upon the general balance of our commerce, money would rise in value in proportion to such loss. But all things have their bounds: the very encrease of private property would render the condition of the nation the more calamitous, should the legislature, which may be considered as the great merchant of the state, enter into such deep engagements as to become bankrupt: for if the government lives upon the principal, without fixing certain bounds, it will not signify that the people live on the interest, since their mutual preservation is inseparably connected.

From this general position it may be deduced, that although the public debt has been the cause of public taxes, yet it is owing also to the same cause, that thousands have lived upon the interest of their money, when they must have otherwise encroached upon the principal; and, impoverishing themselves, have done more injury to the state, than it now suffers by the public debt; because the state has so enlarged a credit beyond any private person.

According to the present circumstances of things, a public debt is undoubtedly a benefit; but ours is too large: the great point is to observe the due measure and degree of it. Thirty or forty millions may be always convenient; and, if the state should require so much in time of war, even fifty or sixty millions may be supportable without danger to the constitution. There is a certain proportion of taxes, beyond which the inhabitants will not, or cannot pay, without

^d E. g. If the government buys of me 1000 l. what I should not otherwise have sold for above 7 or 800, the national debt is increased, but so is my property also.

out danger to their liberty. If our debt should ever exceed a sum, for which the government cannot pay a proper interest, without exacting heavier taxes, than such as we are supposing to be consistent; though liberty may not be endangered to the present generation, yet we must entail such an incumbrance on posterity, as will hardly consist with their freedom.

The British nation is now said to owe eighty millions: in case of a war this may be enlarged to an hundred, or an hundred and twenty millions; the interest of which, tho' at three and half per cent. is four millions two hundred thousand pounds. So vast a principal sum would necessarily alarm the creditors on every occasion of the least danger. In proportion as that alarm encreased, public love among the people would be changed into a timorous self-love, and a looking out each for himself; and the state might thus be reduced to bankruptcy.

The present reduction of interest to a standard of three and half per cent. seems to have all the marks of a judicious and equitable policy; but if we were to go much lower, the question is, if the state would not suffer more by the distress of individuals, than benefit by a saving in this manner? Supposing a further reduction should no ways injure the national credit, yet it would fall too hard upon those who have no other possible dependence than that of national interest; consequently expedients of a more general nature seem eligible. Annuities on lives, for instance, have been recommended; these appear better for the state than the people; and yet numbers would accept of annuities. If the nation has patience to wait for twenty years, we may perhaps see thirty or forty millions of this debt paid off, in the method already established; perhaps we shall be able to support ourselves with honour and safety in so long a peace, or the accumulated strength of our neighbours may not, at the expiration of that time, render it necessary to swell the debt as great as it was before, and entail this incumbrance on posterity.

* It may be doubted which of the two is the greater evil, to suffer the diminution of interest during life, or the loss of the principal after death. Where there are no families in the case, the latter seems the most eligible, otherwise it would certainly be a less evil to suffer a reduction of our revenues without affecting the principal, than for a man's children to be plunged into poverty.

Of the two evils however, the more speedy diminution of the debt appears the most eligible, supposing that it would tend most to the security of this vast property. It is not a sufficient consolation to those who extend their views beyond the present hour, nor yet consistent with the dignity of the nation to say, "that so long as the government exists, the public security of the funds will be supported." As a commercial nation, we ought to calculate better, than to run a risk greatly exceeding all the advantages we can possibly propose. This is putting the thing upon a dangerous and fallacious issue; for it seems much less difficult to imagine a continuance of the independency of the nation, through the vicissitudes to which it is subject; than of the support of the public credit, through the necessities to which the government may be reduced; especially if we should be soon involved in another formidable war, that may shake the foundations of this constitution.

Though Great Britain has just grounds to complain of her vices and immoralities, there seems to be religion and virtue enough left in the island; to create a submission to the dispensations of providence, even in a case so shocking, as that of plunging eighteen or twenty thousand people, with ten times as many more who are their dependents, and the meanest of them above the labouring part of the people, at one stroke into the lowest poverty. But the evil would be extended to very remote consequences, whilst the national stock would not be in the least increased; unless we suppose foreigners who have their money in our hands, must also submit to see us turn bankrupts, and at the same time hold such a rich landed estate as ours, unengaged for any future payment. What politicians are these who suppose this nation so corrupt as to run such a risk without any general benefit? The property of the merchants is in a great measure connected with the public credit: if that credit should fail, what an immense circulation would cease! what a wound would our commerce receive, in consequence of the loss of that imaginary wealth which is now as good as real!

It is true, we have an example in France of no antient date, of a large national debt being paid with a sponge: but France was, and still is, under arbitrary power; the honour of individuals is consequently at a much lower ebb than among us: and what could we expect for so national a crime as this, but the tenfold curse of despotic rule?

No

No man of common modesty, or common sense, will pretend to say that a nation, computed upon a fair calculation to be worth from 600 to 800 millions, cannot pay off half a debt of 80 millions. The possibility is apparent; the great point is, to levy such an equal tax as shall not distress the poor, nor leave the rich any just cause of complaint. Whatever is done, ought to be calculated for the main end in view, which is the preservation of liberty, in the manner most practicable and agreeable to the genius of the people. The debt was contracted to supply the exigencies of the state, and to protect the whole body of the nation; the whole body of the nation then are obliged to repay it; and if the state requires it, not by taxes on the common people, but according to the proportions of the actual possessions of every individual^f, in such a manner as should not appear in the least degree destructive of liberty. Those who urge that great part of this sum has been devoured in bribes, unjust accounts, and a whole list of crying enormities under past administrations, say very little to the purpose; for if this is not true, the argument amounts to nothing more than a calumnious report; and if it is true, though we must own they are injuries committed against the whole community, yet they are injuries of such a nature, that the whole community are answerable for them to themselves, and must for their own sakes make good the consequences of them.

Men who think soberly on this subject, will hardly conceive that a British government has ever entertained so impious a thought, as to mean to annul this debt; or that any party secretly wish for it; consequently all political predictions on this principle ought to be treated as dishonourable reveries, and melancholy delusions. We ought rather to suppose, that the landed as well as monied interest of the nation, mean to pay off this debt in such a necessary proportion, as will strengthen our credit, already so justly superior to that of any other nation.

That Great Britain is immensely rich, is indubitable. A land tax of one shilling produces half a million to the crown; and if the assessment was just and equal, and the charge of collecting reduced, it would then amount to a whole million: it follows, that the annual revenues of the proprietors of land only, are 20 millions; consequently at the mode-

^f Even one per cent. per annum on real property, exclusive of other taxes, would, in six or eight years, produce a vast treasure.

rate computation of 20 years purchase, the value is 400 millions; may not the annual industry of this nation be deemed equal to the produce of above half as much more; not to mention the plate, jewels, money, mines and houses &c.

On the other hand, if the proprietors in good earnest felt the evil at their doors, and that they are the real debtors, and subject to be arrested by each other: if they were in danger of sequestration by civil war, or in consequence of foreign invasion, how greatly would this valuation sink! I am not versed in political arithmetic, but I will suppose the value in question to be only 600 millions in the whole; would not a gradual diminution, or rather change of property of five or six in the hundred of this national stock, in the space of eight or ten years, and I hope there is no danger of being involved in a war sooner, be a less evil than to continue so deeply in debt as we now are? Would not this method enrich the proprietors of the ninety-four parts? By this means all taxes on every branch of trade, and on every article of consumption, would be diminished in so great a degree, that these ninety four parts would be then more valuable than the hundred are now ^a. If this can be demonstrated, we seem to be in the circumstances of that miser who offered a shilling to be bled; but the surgeon demanding half a crown, before the contest was decided, the man died. This may be our case, for we are subject to a political as well as a natural death.

Something of this sort would certainly be brought into execution, if every proprietor would say to his own heart, "I am flattering myself into a belief that I owe nothing, when I really owe a tenth part of my estate; which if I do not offer to pay off in part, though the government should not compel me to it, the danger my children are exposed to of losing the whole, is greater than the inconvenience of paying my share at this time. Can I answer it to my conscience to leave the poor to pay my debt from their daily labour? Is it possible they can pay it whilst the taxes do little more than answer the interest of

this

^b Some professed calculators make the revenues for the support of the people and the government forty three millions, which corresponds with the supposition I have made above.

^c The vast expence this government is at in collecting taxes would revert into the national treasuries, as well as the labour of collectors, who must find a different employment.

“ this debt, and the current annual expence of the government in time of peace ?”

The reader may laugh at the expression my debt, till he considers that the term my country in this land of liberty is adopted as proper ; the first indeed means a deprivation of a good, as the last implies the possession of one. The debt of the public is certainly the debt of a number of individuals ; but because every one considers the sum in the gross, and thinks but with repugnance on his proportion of it, the mind being lost on the one side in the greatness of the idea, and distressed on the other by the painfulness of it, turns to some other object.

Are we not bound, in proportion to the degree of power and fortune we possess, to act as if this debt was our own, in the common sense of the word ? If every member of the body politic thus considered himself, he could not with common honesty avoid being anxious to clear himself of his share, in a necessary proportion, as already observed ; and to exert his utmost abilities that others should perform their duty in like manner, and make self-love and social the same common principle.

Though the riches of some, or the poverty of others, may make them repugnant to the receipt of any part of their principal money ; and though it may be imagined that national funds which pay interest are national benefits ; yet it seems to be a glaring absurdity, that we had better remain so deep in debt, than discharge any part of it ; unless we had at the same time a sinking fund annually accumulating, and devoted to the support of a war, or any important call of the nation. Such a fund can hardly be supposed, for then the government would pay a large interest for a sum laying dead, out of pure love to such people who might be ignorant how to employ their money in any other way. It is, I presume, most natural to imagine, that the less we owe, the higher interest the public can afford to give upon an emergency : for that emergency we ought to be ready ; we know it will come : if we judge from the experience of past ages, it is, humanly speaking, as certain as death, though we know not the time of either. Money is plenty now, but experience does not warrant its being so in time of war ; on the contrary, an unprofitable peace is sometimes submitted to, merely for want of money, tho' we are at the same time so rich a nation ; which proves how the want of public love may subvert a monarchy. The higher interest the nation gives, the greater sums it can raise

raiseⁿ, and consequently whilst money, as well as good soldiers is confessedly the sinews of war, the fairer we bid for a secure and lasting peace.

Perhaps it may be also found, that this debt, as is generally experienced among private men, wounds the œconomy of the state; if it does not prevent such a number of ships of war being constantly employed, as might tend to the better support of our naval strength.

What but the consideration of this debt could have so long induced a nation famed through the world for humanity, to raise a tax on the miserable poor, for the liberty of destroying themselves with liquid fire, whilst it became a provocation to them to destroy others also, and endanger the very foundations of society?

From hence it must appear of how great importance it is to diminish a national debt, when we see so striking an instance of the necessities of a government arising from that debt. No one will pretend to say that a minister, who is a man of sense and humanity, could be either ignorant or careless in this respect. Is it however possible that a ministry should see the people indifferent with relation to the public, and without any scruple enriching themselves beyond due measure out of the public money, without being alarmed? A ministry less moderate and disinterested than the present, might be almost tempted to consider the government and the people in a distinct view: for what is more according to the corruption of the human heart than this, that when a people do not observe their duty with regard to the government, the government should have the less tenderness for the people? Is not this consideration sufficient to rouse a nation to a sense of virtue?

There are without doubt many political points of universal concernment to a nation, and yet not easy to be understood. It is the business only of a few to know all the secret springs which move a government; hence we may justly entertain a jealousy of our private apprehensions. Some points however will be canvassed, whether they are understood or not: every body can talk, though some may not clearly understand their own meaning.

We ought to thank heaven for what is already done towards our relief, By the particular countenance shown by the

ⁿ The country is maintained by some, but that can be only in time of peace and safety, and at best proves only that the people know not how to employ all their money.

the ministry, and the generous efforts of the Patriot Citizen, the interest of the national debt is reduced. There were some struggles in obtaining this necessary, great, and valuable point. That patriot citizen will not, I fear, live to see his scheme carried into execution in all its parts. The reduction of interest seems to be in effect a sumptuary law, which ought to extend to all ranks and orders.

I presume that men even in the greatest offices, profess to be no more than servants of the people; the foundation of a free government supposes the first regard due to them: consequently if the necessities of the people, for the support of the state, require their living lower in their rank; those whom they enable to live in splendor, according to the nature of their respective offices in the state, ought in all reason to contribute in proportion; for this plain reason, that instead of weakening their own dignity, and by this means hurting the community, they will probably, do it the greatest service, and answer the wise ends for which the people have agreed to support them in that splendor.

A liberal allowance is perhaps at all times necessary to the principal offices in a great state; and if some prodigality is countenanced when that state is in a flourishing condition, what mighty injury can it receive? But can a state be said to flourish in the sense of the present argument, when it is involved in a heavy debt? To make no distinction seems to argue as gross an impropriety as the conduct of that private man who, when his estate is without incumbrance, lives up to the height of it, and when it becomes deeply mortgaged, still makes the same expence. He may perhaps have the address to support himself for a considerable time; but if winds blow down his barns, or mortality rage among his cattle, what will become of his estate? Nations are subject to calamities as well as private men; and the exercise of human wisdom is as necessary in public as private affairs.

Upon the occasion of the late reduction of national interest, neighbouring nations began to gaze with wonder as if the golden age was restored to this island, and that this reduction of national interest would be followed by that of national pensions, and of the great salaries annexed to some offices,

* The French ministers, I am told, declared without reserve, that they thought the thing impracticable.

offices, so as to bear a proportion to the savings upon the article of interest, and thus enable the government to make great advances in the payment of the national debt. In this their opinion has out-run our virtue; but much may be expected from the equal spirit that prevails in the legislature. It is true, speculative and active virtue differ extremely. There are always more philosophers in theory than in practice; yet it ought to be presumed that those who think justly, will endeavour to act consistently.

Every man of great rank and office in this nation must either believe that our debt is really an object of no danger, and that we are conjuring up a spirit for the pleasure of being frightened; or he must be of a contrary opinion; if the last, supposing he wishes the happiness of his country, which ought to be presumed, will he not in his serious hours reason thus with his own heart? “ I see my country involved in a
“ heavy debt which injures her foreign influence and her
“ domestic security. It is true our affairs are mending; the
“ interest of money is lowered, but can this produce so
“ speedy a reduction of the national debt as our welfare requires? Is it in my power to do any real service to my
“ country? Is it not my duty to contribute to her wants?
“ The circumstances of the times are such, that I am not
“ called upon for any reduction of the salary which I receive
“ of the public, and perhaps my example will not make any
“ impression; but if the thing is right and proper to me, it
“ is so to all persons under the same circumstances as I am;
“ nor will it be less right, though it should be deemed an
“ affectation of popularity, an enthusiasm in politics, or a
“ rank hypocrisy. Some body must begin: it may not be
“ convenient for the minister: I confess it appears to me
“ just and consistent; and my conscience dictates it to me;
“ I can live with most honour on a smaller income; for
“ instead of pampering my dependents in a luxurious superfluity, I may become an instrument of providence to
“ save eight or nine millions of people, who are all dear
“ to me, from the miseries of civil war, or the despotic
“ tyranny of some bold invader: but it is certain I shall
“ perform an act of justice to my country. I shall do a
“ charity which I hope will be acceptable in the sight of
“ God. I shall express my gratitude to the public, as that
“ common benefactor by which my ancestors have been
“ supported through so many ages; and by which I have
“ myself enjoyed all the comforts and delights of the
“ happiest government in the world, under one of the best
“ of

“ of kings. Perhaps in the chain of effects, and the course
“ of a wise and good providence, this single action might
“ also be a means of preserving the welfare of a great part
“ of Europe; for if the antient virtue of this island is re-
“ stored to it; the native valour of my countrymen may
“ establish them as the arbiters of European liberty, or at
“ least secure our own on the most permanent basis.”

Were such visionary speculations brought into action, which is at least possible; would a minister deny his acquiescence to such a conduct, and think such a man a lunatic; or rejoice to see an instance of disinterested and generous regard to the community? Would he be sorry to find himself in a fair way of being relieved from those perplexities in which ministers in Great Britain have been generally involved? Would he lament to see a large saving to the nation, instead of that anxiety which attends a want of money for the purposes of government?

If such a conduct were the issue of a solid judgment and well-regulated affections; and if the necessities of the nation do require such a conduct; it may be asked why is not this, or something equal to it, brought into execution, by the minister, who has the power? Is not this begging the question? Would a minister in Great Britain have any power at all, was he to attempt making the people virtuous in despite of themselves? It is impossible that he can be ignorant of the inclination of the people; and if they have not virtue enough to save the nation, that is, themselves, whenever the matter is brought to this issue, what power on earth can save them?

By operating with their bad affections, a minister might bring the people to a speedier ruin; or by a judicious opposition of them, ward off the blow for a time; but can he support the people against their wills? Let us consider the thing in another light: if those who enjoy places and pensions, and may, in some measure, have the power of acting in this respect as they please, have too much wit, or too little virtue, to renounce any part of the profits arising from such places and pensions, from a consideration that the state is in need; it will not follow that the landed and commercial interest, which is incomparably the most wealthy, may not contribute as largely as the state requires. Such an unbiassed disinterestedness would never be their ruin. The more virtue there is in the nation, the longer it will stand: therefore if the place or pension-man does not shew the nobility, or the

the country gentlemen an example of patriotism ; if these begin, the effect will be near the same.

In short, if the ruling passion of persons in any state, is the preservation of their country, they will rather consider the end, than the means. They will subscribe to any method not in itself inconsistent, rather than spend their time in a fruitless debate. I suppose we are still a free and a wise nation ; whatever method then the legislature may appoint, the virtuous will unite in warding off every calamity to which the nation is exposed.

A resolution of the legislature to pay off a large proportion of the debt by taxes, unprecedented in these latter times, would appear to many as an invasion of liberty, and a greater evil than to suffer the debt to be paid in more moderate proportions. On the other hand, some apprehend it to be more inconsistent with liberty, that we should owe so heavy a national debt ; and think it ought to be reduced by extraordinary taxes. If men of fortune are of this last opinion, and have virtue enough to act up to their principles, we shall soon owe a less exorbitant sum. If they are not of that opinion, or have not virtue to act up to their principles, with what countenance can they complain ?

C H A P. VII.

A description of Haerlem. Reflexions on retirement in advanced age. Of Leyden and the Hague. A brief account of the house of Orange.

ON the 16th of October I took my leave of Amsterdam, where it was my fortune to be at a season that was rude and disagreeable. Were the people in that city so disposed to kill themselves in an ill humour as they are in another great trading metropolis. I should think it at least as proper a place for this purpose, especially in the present month. When the frost comes on, they are more braced and active, and at all times too busy to fall into this atrocious practice. I embarked at the Haerlem gate, taking the ^a roof of the treckscoot : these stage-boats are extremely commodious, as they set out at stated hours, and perform their passage at a certain time almost to a minute ; but the common part of the

^a The cabin.

the boat is often reckoned insupportable, from the custom of smoaking tobacco, so highly offensive to some persons.

The Haerlem canal is bounded by meadow-lands, well covered with horned cattle; but there are not many houses near the banks. In two hours and a half we reached Haerlem. This is a town of very great note, and not less distinguished for its cleannesse. It is remarkable for bleaching, also for the manufactory of linen, and several other material articles. Here was a considerable garrison of soldiers: the fortification, in some parts, is only a lofty brick wall. This place is said to have flourished so early as the year 1155. In 1292 a revolution happened, in which great part of it was burnt: a circumstance of the like nature happened by accident in 1347. In 1573 it was taken by the Spaniards, who treated the inhabitants with great cruelty; 1700 men, the remains of the garrison, were either hanged, or put to the sword, for defending themselves eight months. Here are twelve churches, of which four only are of the established religion. Haerlem lays claim to the invention of printing, which they attribute to Lawrence Coster, who was born here about the beginning of the 15th century. A little to the south of this city is the Haerlem-Meer, which is a large lake, but as it abounds in shallows, and is too much exposed to the wind, the canal is much preferable for the commerce with Amsterdam.

After a short stay I embarked for Leyden: the land behind Haerlem is hilly and sandy, and the banks of the Leyden canal are higher than those of Haerlem. Here they cover their cows with body-cloaths, assigning this as a reason, that by keeping their backs warm, they give milk the more abundantly. There are several country houses and plantations of trees, and agreeable walks. About three miles from Haerlem is Hartcamp, the country-seat of old Mr. Clifford; this gentleman is possessed of a considerable fortune, and having a taste for gardening, he passes his time mostly in the country.

The acquisition of riches being, for the most part, the supreme object of a Dutchman's attention; seldom any of them leave the world till the world leaves them, however indulgent providence may have been to them, with regard to the means of a comfortable and honourable retirement. It is no uncommon thing in all countries to grasp at the objects of avarice and ambition even under the circumstances of age and sickness; and though such men see themselves, if they see at all, suspended by a hair between the visible
and

and invisible world, yet will they continue to be led by the delusions of the mind. It is true, there is nothing in which we are oftener mistaken, than in our apprehensions of the pleasures of retirement, after a life devoted to business. Men of contemplative minds are apt to think of this too early, and persons of a contrary turn never imagine it is late enough. Active virtue is certainly preferable to that which is passive only; yet it seems unpardonable in old men of easy fortunes, who, having made the experiment, find that they can bring themselves to a relish of a contemplative life, that they do not devote the greatest part of their latter days to it. Every profession, I believe, has reason enough to rejoice in an opportunity of making up for the deficiencies of the earlier part of life; but some callings, in a more peculiar manner, keep the mind in a continual hurry, or, which is much the same, in a closer attention to the concerns of this world than is consistent with the duties of religion. Old men ought to be ready to assist with their counsel: but is it not sometimes an injury to the society for them to refuse giving up the more active scenes of life? Those who are best qualified, by their years and strength, for a greater fertility and energy of thought, should certainly have the office which God and nature seems to have appointed for them. Mr. Clifford, in this respect, has judged like a man of sense and virtue.

It may be observed however, that, in commercial nations, men of the most advanced age, and greatest fortunes, seem to think it as consistent to die with a pen, as with a prayer-book, in their hands. The opulency of nations, in some measure, arises from this spirit; but it cannot be right policy to give more of ourselves to this world than belongs to it. Besides, most of the good purposes of life relating to national welfare, may be answered by initiating our sons or relations into an early taste of commerce, and committing it to their conduct before we die, under circumstances that may render it pleasant, as well as profitable; rather than to leave them immense fortunes, perhaps to be squandered after our death, merely for want of this precaution.

The distance to Leyden is fifteen English miles: we were four hours exactly on the way. On the bank of the canal, near this place, is the seat of the famous Dr. Boerhave, now in the hands of a person of that name, who also professes physic. This place is well known for its university, and great antiquity. It is also remarkable for a consider-

able manufactory of woollen cloth, which however, for some years past, has very much decreased, partly owing to the decay of the Persian trade carried on by the Armenians, which equally affects the silk manufactories of Amsterdam^b. There is a considerable number of students from all parts of Europe, and the university is of great reputation. They have generally a very large garrison: The city in itself is neat and agreeable; but, as most other places in the United Provinces have too much water, this has not enough; nor has it such a communication with the sea as affords a proper motion by tides to keep the water sweet. The gardens about it are extremely fruitful, and land bears a prodigious price.

In 1574 the Spaniards besieged this town, upon which occasion the inhabitants, to the number of about twenty thousand, behaved with such intrepid valour during a siege of five months, that the very women performed the military duty. About six thousand died of the plague and famine; and being at length reduced to the last extremity, they were summoned by the Spanish general Francis Baldez to surrender; they answered bravely, that so long as they had a Left arm, they should not want provision; and that they would employ their Right to defend their liberty. They say that Adrian de Werf, a burgomaster, being importuned by some of the inhabitants to surrender the city, replied, "Since I must die my friends, it does not signify whether it be by you, or the enemy; cut my body into pieces and divide it amongst you; I shall expire contented, if I can be a means of preserving you, though it were for one hour only." Providence at length interposed in a signal manner for their deliverance; count Lewis of Nassau, brother to the prince of Orange, came to their succour, and obliged the Spaniards to retire.

From Leyden I went to the Hague, where we arrived in three hours. A place so renowned for political negotiations would, on that account, be celebrated in the journals of travellers, even though it was not in itself equal, in some respects, to the proudest cities in Europe: it has no inclosure, and is called a village; the streets are broad, and several of them

^b It appears that the Dutch were jealous of the English trade through Russia to Persia, and that Mr. De Dieu applied in 1745 for the same privilege as the British subjects then enjoyed, in order to obtain an ample supply of silk. At present the great decline of this branch of trade is owing to the troubles in Persia.

are without canals: their houses for the most part are extremely well built. The number of coaches belonging to noblemen and gentlemen, and the gay appearance of dress, give one an idea of life very different from that of the trading cities. People here are more polite and easy in their carriage than in other parts of Holland; this is a natural consequence of some of the most considerable persons in Europe meeting there continually for political affairs, in the service of almost every European prince: besides as the States General assemble here, this draws the greatest part of the people of the first distinction in the United Provinces. The Hague may also be considered either as a great city, or a rural scene: for the Environs which immediately inclose it are extremely delightful; whilst they have plays, and other amusements, as customary in great cities.

The air of this place is said to be very wholesome. Sir William Temple attributes longer life to the inhabitants of this village, than to those of any other place in the United Provinces; yet are the people more careless in cleaning their canals, than is consistent with the preservation of health. It is really amazing how men decline into neglects injurious to the society, which might be prevented with the least thought and industry. Near this place is the palace known by the name of the house in the wood, which belongs to the prince of Orange; as also Ryswick, famous for the peace of 1697.

One of the finest houses in the Hague belongs to count William Bentinck, and was now occupied by the prince of Orange. As this nobleman had been so extremely obliging in Hanover, as to invite me to his house at the Hague, I went to pay my respects to him at Sorgvliet, where he generally resides in the summer season: but he was gone to meet his Britannic majesty in his return from Hanover. This seat is near two English miles distance, and much frequented by persons of taste. The house is of little note; but the gardens, though in many parts yet uncultivated, are delightful. They abound in lofty trees, and different kinds of hanging walks, which diversify the scene, and render them very pleasant, particularly in a country where most of their country-seats are upon a dead flat: on the road to it there is a public garden, in imitation of Vaux-Hall.

At the Hague are only two churches of any consequence. Though several of the streets abound in shops, their trade is mostly confined to their own consumptions; hence this place is preferred for the quartering of the soldiery, of whom here was a regiment of grey cavalry of Hessians, who

who made a gallant appearance, also a regiment of Dutch dragoons, and two regiments of infantry. The pay of a common soldier in the Dutch service is four stivers, cloaths deducted; but provisions are dear. I observed their cloathing, which is blue, is of much better cloth than that in which his Prussian majesty's soldiers are clad; the serjeants of the guards have silver laced regimentals. The Dutch are distinguished from the Hessians and Swiss by white breeches. They are extremely neat, their hair being dressed in the manner of the Prussian soldiers, but their cloaths are not quite so short: they are incumbered with heavier swords and larger hats, whilst their muskets are lighter. They perform their exercise with exactness, and are examined every fourth day that their arms be kept in order. In 1666 the Dutch had 60,000 men in pay, and four years after at the general peace, upon the reduction of the army they continued 26,200 men, which costing annually six millions of guilders, this we may reckon twenty-three pounds each man, officers included.

As this place might be considered more immediately the court of the prince of Orange, I hardly expected to hear any thing said of him disrespectfully. It is well known however with what reluctance a considerable party in the United Provinces submitted to this prince's accession to the dignity enjoyed by his fore-fathers; though he had so just a title, not only on account of their merit, but his own also; and not less from the nature of the constitution of that country, and the experience of past ages, than from the particular danger of the time, in which this event was brought about.

William, surnamed the Great, was the first Stadt-Holder, and may be properly called the founder of the republic. He spent his life in the study of war and politics, in which he was a great proficient, and not less distinguished for his private virtues. He was at length assassinated, in consequence of the resentments of the Spaniards, and sealed the generous actions of his life with his blood. His son Maurice, the second stadtholder, adhering to the virtuous principles of his father, supported the independency of the republic. Henry Frederic, the next brother, succeeding to the stadtholdership, distinguished himself as a warrior and a patriot. The fourth stadtholder was William II. who married the eldest daughter of our king Charles I. This prince dying at the age of twenty-four, left a posthumous son, who was our William III. In his infancy the dignity of stadtholdership was annulled; but the terror of French armies obliged

the States to recur to that expedient to which they owed their very being, as a republic. King William fought their battles, and saved them. After his decease, though the dignity of stadtholder was not abolished, it was suffered to expire; nor did the States revive it till the sixth and present stadtholder, William Charles Henry Frizo, a collateral branch of the illustrious house of Orange, who by the salutary mediation of a strong party of his friends, and the spirit of a mob, when a French army was already at their doors, had this dignity conferred on him in 1745. With what moderation he has used it, and what little respect has been shewed to it, the history of the times will make apparent. I only mention what fell under my notice of the general turn of the party in the United Provinces, who were luke-warm friends, or no friends at all, to the prince; with this distinction however, that some who hated the Stadtholder, loved the Prince.

Considering the neighbourhood and great power of France, the present, as they think, precarious peace, and the disunion of their councils; the Dutch seem to be persuaded that there must be a power lodged in one, to unite and exert their force in case of danger. Reason and experience have taught them the necessity of this power: But a state must possess more virtue than I am afraid there is among the Dutch, to suppress those prejudices and resentments which are apt to arise in the minds of one part of a people upon any change of government. The anti-stadtholders, who wish to see the prince pulled out of his seat, operate with him most heartily in making provision for the very men they most despise, or hate, whenever they think they can, by this means, render his office odious to the people: thus his highness has to struggle with secret, as well as professed enemies. Men of moderation say, he does not want parts, that he is a man of a most amiable disposition, of an excellent heart, and yet every day he loses ground; alledging that "his disposition may be good; but the effects of it are "bad, by his being too indulgent to men of no principles."

It is a common saying, we love the treason, though we hate the traitor: to save a state can hardly be called treason; but it is generally thought a dangerous maxim in politics, to put men in offices of trust, whose principles allow them to take any side that may afterwards appear to be their interest. But how will they prove, that the prince makes choice of such men? It may be suspected, that those who are not in office are, for that very reason, disaffected. It is granted that

that many persons, whose power is now eclipsed, ought not to be admitted to the offices of the state, because they have a rooted dislike to the prince, as well as to the stadtholdership: but then it is objected, that those who love the prince, and acquiesce sincerely in the power vested in him; who are capable of service, and beloved by the people, are notwithstanding kept out of office. They acknowledge that every honest man cannot be employed; but that such persons of worth and honour ought not to be rejected, for the servile tools, and lower instruments, who brought the prince into office, but are by no means able to establish such a degree of power, as is essential to that office; that such men ought rather to be rewarded in a pecuniary way, or by employments abroad; but not to be preferred so as to disgrace their very patrons, who are ashamed to own their having brought them into place: whereas by chusing men of worth and reputation, who are really the prince's friends, there would be no difficulty in his acquiring a proper ascendancy, and thereby establish himself in the minds of the people.

How the prince ought to act, is hard to say; but this is clear to me, that his very moderation which would render him amiable in a virtuous age, will make him contemptible in a vicious one; for, without a great share of resolution, it is not possible to govern men, who have been used to make their own will the law and rule of their conduct.

To drop so critical a point, let us consider the authority of a stadtholder, which is very confined, unless when he appears at the head of an army, and then perhaps he is not only an object of jealousy, but his power too much circumscribed. The stadtholder sometimes signs public treaties in conjunction with the states, but such treaties do not derive from hence the greater weight or authenticity; for though he is supposed to represent the dignity of the republic, yet whilst the States possess the sovereignty, he cannot be considered but as a subject. He has indeed the power to pardon condemned malefactors; but he has not even a seat or vote in the assemblies of the States. There are certain prerogatives annexed to the office, which vary in the different provinces, and are alterable by the power from whence they are derived, that is, by the States General.

The stadtholdership, which is now made hereditary in the house of Orange, was, from its original nature, elective; but the high and indelible obligations which the Dutch owe to William the Great; and the renowned patriotism and fidelity of the illustrious house of Orange, through

every generation, have ever thrown the choice on this family as a kind of necessary consequence.

The appointment of the stadtholdership from the States, is one hundred thousand guilders ^b, and the prince's paternal inheritance is far more considerable.

But, alas! while we are yet speaking, his candle is burnt out; and all our wishes for his temporal happiness vanish like a dream in the night. The memory of this excellent Prince will indeed ever retain a sweet favour, and must do honour to human nature, whilst probity is revered by mankind.

C H A P. VIII.

A general account of the commerce and cause of riches, as also of the air, soil, &c. of the United Provinces. Of the genius and manners of the Dutch, their parsimony, cloathing, women, &c.

IT may appear careless to leave the United Provinces without some general reflections, especially as travellers, either in pursuit of learning or pleasure, seldom consider this country in the same light as Italy or France; and consequently there is not much said of it, except in laborious historical accounts. Indeed it ought not to be expected from one who only rides post, that he should be able to give an accurate and circumstantial account of a foreign country, when perhaps he knows very little of his own, after living in it for many years.

I know not if any body has given an account of the United Provinces so worthy of esteem as that of Sir William Temple. His general idea of these people in his time is contained in the words: "Holland is a country where the earth is better than the air, and profit more in request than honour; where there is more sense than wit; more good nature than good humour; and more wealth than pleasure; where a man would chuse rather to travel than to live; shall find more things to observe than desire; and more persons to esteem than to love."

As a kind of contrast to what is remarked by this polite author, the following description will corroborate the notion which the unprejudiced reader may have received of the genius of the Dutch, and the nature of their country. This
burlesque,

burlesque, and perhaps obscure historian says, " In Holland
" the four elements are good for nothing; it is a country
" where they worship a golden idol, seated on a throne of
" cheese, and crowned with tobacco; where art surpasses
" nature, and industry alone makes the state flourish; where
" rusticity of speech is preferred to the perswasive softness
" of gentle words, and a coarseness of manners makes a show
" of liberty; where the wives are mistresses, and the husbands
" servants; where the houses, by dint of frequent
" washings, appear as cabinets; and an excess of cleanliness
" is inconvenient: in a word, where butter and cheese is the
" harvest and reward of the people's toil."

The Dutch are most certainly devoted to commerce, and, though in the midst of Europe, detached as it were from other nations: they are bred up in an abhorrence of regal power, and consequently have a distaste of the manners of the polite nations who are subject to this form of government. Under these circumstances they can hardly be supposed to raise many men of genius, or to cultivate the more refined arts of contemplative life and liberal science. It may be presumed that later ages have improved many of the higher ranks of their people, but perhaps some of them have at the same time exchanged their parsimonious simplicity for an expensive and luxurious manner of living, and by rendering themselves necessitous, opened a way to those temptations which their artful and ambitious neighbours have thought proper to play upon them.

The ease, the gentleness, the sweetness of manners which we find in the polite nations, are seldom possessed, even amongst the higher ranks of the people in Holland, though we often meet with an excess of complaisance: nor is this at all surprising if we consider that men devoted to arts of gain from their earliest life, can with difficulty be formed to a true taste of society. The amusement in which the Dutch have the greatest pretence to delicacy, is that of gardening, for which some of them contract so great a passion, that I have heard there is a law restraining the price of tulip roots.

They are so well convinced that much diversion not only creates expence, but calls off the mind from business and domestic duties, that in Amsterdam no public shows are permitted within the walls. After seven in the evening every person that passes the gates pays one stiver, and a coach five stivers; so that diversions are taxed with this impost. It is not however very considerable, for the people have not a

great passion for theatrical entertainments. In the winter time skating is their greatest amusement. Their retired manner of living is often the occasion that the men when they affect a chearful, polite, and delicate turn of manners, are awkward; and when gay, wicked: the same remark holds with the women also, when they depart from a reserved habit of life.

Their notions of religion, which must ever influence the manners of a people, are not very liberal; and though the practice of it is strictly enjoined as a duty, it does not appear to be rendered delightful. I have heard an Hollander ingeniously acknowledge, that their priests cannot be in any great reputation, for want of that politeness which is essential to all ranks of men in office in a civilized state. Sir William Temple's remark is, "That if religion does more good in other places, it does less hurt here."

The same author imputes the grandeur of their state in a great measure to the modesty and simplicity of their manner of living, which was the general fashion among the first magistrates in his time; and he adds, that he never saw the great pensioner De Wit in a coach, nor his cloathing, equipage, house or furniture, beyond that of any private merchant.

It is not difficult to conceive, that constant application to business, and indefatigable industry not diverted by any of the warmer passions, nor by the habit or temptation of pleasure, should produce that degree of wealth, power and influence, at which the Hollanders once arrived, and of which, with respect to individuals, they may yet boast.

With regard to the air or water of the Netherlands, the elements are in no country more blended than in this. The abundance of water must necessarily affect the air: at some seasons of the year, many of their most fertile spots are overflowed, which renders both land and water disagreeable. Those Dutchmen who know little but of their own country, ask how we manage in England to keep our cattle in the field during the winter. Turf, which is reckoned much inferior to wood or coal, is the chief article of fuel to the inhabitants. But this land of moisture does not ordinarily prevent the people from enjoying a moderate share of health, though their lives seem to be shorter than with us in Great Britain. There are several instances of remarkable recoveries in Holland, from consumptive cases, which I believe are not so general among them as in England. The reason of this I impute not so much to their climate as their careful manner of cloathing. In England people too often dress,
feed,

feed, and expose themselves to heat and cold, without any regard to difference of constitution. A careless indifference in this respect must be often attended with the same or worse consequences, than an injudicious solicitude.

The vapours arising from the canals in Holland, affect the air in such a manner that the fronts of the houses near the water side are frequently discoloured in one night; this occasions a particular attention to the outside as well as the interior part of their buildings. The manner in which the Dutch cloath themselves, is a demonstration how subject they are to rheumatic pains, necessity having taught them that kind of habit, which we are inadvertently apt to ridicule.

There are many Hollanders who think judiciously, and, in some respects, live elegantly; but I believe few philosophically. The common people are extremely boorish: I have seen a boatman in a great city, though indeed the distinction of city and village is very inconsiderable, strut up and down a room with his hat on, his hands on his hips, and, with a careless air of insolence, spit at the feet of a gentleman who was treating him with civility, and giving him an opportunity of gaining a guinea for an inconsiderable service. This sort of conduct they mistake for liberty^b, whilst their knowledge is confined to the ordinary means of gain, and the gratification of the calls of nature. Cheese, beer and tobacco are the joys which seem to crown the labours of the common people: Geneva, to which they are well known to be no enemy, and which is not altogether improper to their climate, contributes much to the circulation of their blood; but they are apt in their cups to mix cruelty with rusticity.

As they are not so much improved in their sentiments as our common people, neither are they so strong, active and capable of labour; this may be imputed not only to the different

^b Foreigners make complaint also of the ill-manners of the common people in England; but this is expressed rather by a libertine than a boorish conduct; and though we have some savages in human shape, yet the general turn of our people is humane: to this purpose I knew an instance of a common fellow who insulted a French lady in the street, by the name of French bitch. Before she advanced many paces she happened to fall, and the same man who had that moment treated her with such unworthy language, was the first who assisted her in rising, addressing her with great complaisance in these words, 'I hope madam you have not hurt yourself.'

ferent genius's of nations, but also to the superiority of our climate, and the different nature of the liberty we enjoy: add to this that the animal food which our common people eat, is incomparably more strengthening than their fish, cheese, milk and grout, to which the poverty of their own produce confines them. It is true the United Provinces abound in pasture lands; but cheese being so great an article of commerce, as some of the inhabitants cannot, others will not, afford themselves flesh for their diet. A moderate use of animal food would, in all probability, tend to the prolongation of their lives in that moist climate.

Constancy of employment, coldness of complexion, and perhaps the nature of their food also, may contribute to their being but little given to amour. The women, I speak not of the higher ranks, adorn their heads with gold lace, and other such ornaments, but with more frugality than generally practised in Germany. Except a few court ladies, they have not much taste or delicacy in their manners. There are some of good complexions, but not many beautiful. Their teeth in general are bad, probably owing to the use of hot liquors, as tea, coffee, &c. I observed particularly at Saardam, that many of the women are pale and languid, and not a few crooked. They acknowledge that most of their children, till the age of eight or ten years, are sickly; and indeed the women seem so incessantly employed in cleaning their houses and other offices, of which some are in common with their husbands, that one would imagine they did not afford themselves rest enough to breed children, or at least not time to support them when they were born. The women in this country seldom breed after the age of thirty. As the men are remarkable for the many breeches they wear, the women, for the most part, use pots with live coals of wood or turf, which they set into boxes bored full of holes, and put under their petticoats, to warm themselves in cold weather; this is not only apt to make them old from the waist downward before the time ordained by nature, but the smell of the coals is offensive. Upon the whole they have a proverbial saying, that the dirtiest piece of furniture in the house of a Dutchman is his wife.

Whether it is the remains of any jealousy which they have retained since the time of the Spanish government, or the mere effect of prudence, I could not help observing that many of them will not mention their wives in company, nor do they seem pleased that others should speak of them; though in the most respectful terms. One would imagine where

where the laws are so favourable to the women, as to give them at least an equal share of dominion with their husbands, that conversation should be more free: this conduct however may be imputed to that incommunicative manner of life, in which the lower and middle sorts of the people are bred up.

It is no uncommon thing in Holland, except among those who have travelled and acquired some generosity of behaviour, to treat strangers by whom they get nothing, with that sort of reserve as plainly indicates that you may go about your business as soon as you please. But there is nothing which lowers the reputation of the Hollanders, or reflects greater dishonour on them than their cruelty. This does not arise so much from fiery particles in their blood, or warm passions, as the love of money, witness their sacrifices of human blood: but they have followed the example of their old masters, by taking the same steps to support themselves in the East as the others did in the West Indies. In this Great Britain is distinguished, no part of her greatness being owing to unwarrantable slaughter.

C H A P. IX.

Of the present situation of the Dutch, and their partiality to France. Their prevailing opinions with regard to Great Britain.

IF we consider a government of so complex a nature as that of the United Provinces, in which such a variety of interest and inclination are necessary to support it in full force and efficacy; it is rather amazing how it has lasted so long, than that of late years it has tottered, and been in danger of subversion. It is no mean entertainment to trace this republic to its origin. Historians seem to agree, that the people of which it is composed, so early as the time when the Roman commonwealth gave laws to a great part of the world, were in the highest degree impatient of any encroachments on their liberty.

Under Philip II. of Spain they groaned under heavy oppressions. Several formidable attempts were made from the year 1556 to 1579, to compel them to submit to an arbitrary power, extended not to their lives and fortunes only, but also to their consciences. Persecutions have often called forth such a degree of human strength as seem to argue the
interposition

interposition of the immediate hand of God. The treaty of Munster in 1648, at length settled the independency of the republic : the deputies of the States were no longer denominated rebels by the Spaniards. The vigilance, sobriety and industry of the Dutch supported their revolt against the crown of Spain, and after many years spent in laborious trials of their own constancy, they formed at length that plan of government which now exists. How long it will last is hard to say ; the foundation of it does not appear to be very stable. A house divided against itself, cannot stand. Whilst these people are not agreed concerning their first magistrate, they will never invest him with power sufficient to answer all the various exigencies to which the state is subject.

It seems evident from their late conduct, from the present condition of that state, and from the nature of their constitution, that they are in no happy, or secure situation. Hence they require the help of a first magistrate, whose power, tho' limited, shall be sufficient to constitute him the umpire of all their interior contests, and who, by a proper direction of their strength, may restore them to a real independency. Their conduct in the late war was a demonstrative proof that themselves conceived their security was founded in the clashing interest of other princes, and that their country was not in such great danger as we commonly apprehended, because the division of the spoil would create difficulties among the neighbouring powers.

A free state, whose inhabitants are rich, surrounded by powerful neighbours, able to support a considerable military force, and yet unwilling to support it, can hardly be presumed to exist long without some change : at least we may conclude that such a system of politics as that of Great Britain contending for the independency of the United Provinces, in the same manner as in the last war, without their exerting their own strength, cannot last long. Supposing that their preservation was not the sole motive on which we set out, yet it must be ever allowed, that if Flanders becomes a prey to France, and the barrier is lost, the liberty of the Dutch is at the mercy of the French : and what would have become of the barrier in the last war, had it not been for Great Britain, it is not difficult to determine.

If the Dutch are incapable of defending themselves ; if their state, though in its early period, is grown decrepit, and needs a support ; can Great Britain afford such a support, or must it come from another quarter on the continent ? What quarter is hard to say. It seems more consistent

tent with their interest to change to some more happy form of government, by a consent of the people, than to run the hazard of being compelled to change for the worse, by some bold invader: and if their independency is of such moment to us, as it may be presumed they imagine, it might be more our interest to assist them in that change, than follow such a system as that of the late war. The Dutch are tenacious of their liberty, but seem to fall into a belief that they need not provide the means of supporting that liberty, as their good friends the English, and other allies, will do that business for them. We may see what notions Sir William Temple had of this republic, when he says, "Thus these stomachful people, who could not endure the least exercise of arbitrary power, or impositions, or the sight of any foreign troops, under the Spanish government, have been since inured to all of them, in the highest degree under their own popular magistrates, bridled with hard laws, terrified with severe executions, environed with foreign forces, and oppressed with the most cruel hardship, and variety of taxes that was ever known under any government." It might be expected, that the remembrance of these calamities, which did not arise from us, but from our common enemies, should, whilst that common enemy is in the same strength and inclination, bind them to us in the strongest friendship; but this is plainly not the case.

Politicians seem to agree, that the interest of the maritime powers is mutual: that is, so long as they in fact continue to be maritime powers: and ought not the United Provinces to continue a maritime power, if they mean to support an independency? The union of such maritime powers might be a counterpoise to that of the house of Bourbon: whereas if they aim at a counterpoise entirely by land, it is plain they must go much farther for it, engage in deeper expences, and complex treaties; and take share in the quarrels of other powers, which must render the welfare of their state the more precarious. Besides, as commerce naturally encreases with naval strength; such union might prove the best means of checking the rapid progress of the trade of other countries, and particularly that of France, whenever it should prove prejudicial to this mutual and natural interest. However consistent this system may be, the fact is, that in the last war, either the timidity of the Dutch; the artifices of French ministers, who disguised this matter; or perhaps that Persuasion which is apt to conquer

quer all mankind, inclined them more to see Great Britain ruined, than erecting new trophies on the ruin of the French commerce. This is very certain, that the Dutch looked with a jealous eye on the British trade, concluding that every step it was advanced, their own would be thrown back.

If our interest was really mutual, they were as blind to their own advantage and security as averse to ours: and if it was not mutual, the system of our politics was founded on a fallacy, which they easily saw through. It is a truth too obvious to be denied, that the Dutch do receive some present advantages by their commerce with France; and this was one great obstacle to our detaching them from that delusive connexion. As to the future, it does not seem to be the fashion of mankind to consider; their thoughts are absorbed in present gratifications. If this were not the case, I presume the thing would have taken a different turn, and remoter consequences would have been examined into.

If the game had been played fair, the question is, whether the bulk of the people of the United Provinces would not have seen, that no point can be more essential to them, than to keep the wings of the house of Bourbon so well clipt, as to put it out of her power to fly away with their country, their riches, and their commerce; for probably they must all go together: it is impossible they can be the same people under an arbitrary monarchy.

Notwithstanding all the artful evasions, and ungenerousness of the Dutch in the late war; it is hard to say what had been their fate, if British valour, and British treasure, had not been so much employed to keep France at bay. That the Dutch set out upon false principles in the late war, I believe all the world will grant. Who can relate without sorrow, the event of the battle of Fontenoy, when victory was snatched from us, not so much by our enemies, as by our friends? We had indeed reason to suspect, that the Dutch did not mean well to us: we knew their government was embarrassed, and wore a double face. Some of their ministers were for fighting, others for a neutrality, and all for saving their money at the expence of their very good and generous friends and antient allies. At length they compromised the matter, and made war in parade, as an excellent expedient to save appearances, and to quiet the minds of their own people, that no desperate attempt might be made to call the prince of Orange to the office of his ancestors. Those in office knew that such a step would eclipse
that

that authority, by means of which they had so long lorded it over the state, and enriched themselves and their families.

It is remarkable that our enemies, who knew the orders and inclination of the Dutch, from a generosity peculiar to soldiers, at the same time they exulted in our credulity, laughed them to scorn. We pulled them indeed to the scene of action; but we could not pull the triggers of their muskets, nor secure their horses from being killed, if they had engaged.

But what shall we say of the friendship and good intentions of the Dutch at that time, if to this very day they avow they could not fight. Morally considered, nations are not accountable to nations for errors in politics; but they are answerable to each other for the non-observance of treaties. Whatever motives biased the conduct of these republicans, the inference from real fact, cannot but raise an indignation in the breasts of those who are inclined to shed a tear to the manes of our brave countrymen, who fell in that unequal war. If the Dutch had declared at that time that they would not, or, which is the same, that they could not fight, and that their army was only for parade and observation; I presume, in such case, we could complain only of the inactivity of their auxiliary troops as stipulated by treaty. And the question is, if, in such cases, the party failing is not subject to all consequences. If this doctrine was proved good, the Dutch might now owe us fifteen or twenty millions of pounds, with a further debt which they can never pay, the lives of fifteen or twenty thousand of the bravest troops in the world.

What sense the people of Holland had of their engagements to us, appears, in some measure, from their behaviour, when news arrived at the Hague of the battle of Fontenoy. It went current that we had deserted the Dutch, and left them to be cut in pieces; insomuch that the inhabitants were highly incensed, and exclaimed bitterly, as if the English had completed that ruin, which our conduct in the Queen's war, they said, had almost produced. When the real fact was known, and the tables turned on them, though it afforded consolation with regard to the safety of their army, the rulers of the state thought it necessary for their own safety to retire out of the town: this was a tacit acknowledgment, that however disposed the people might be to push on the war, they themselves favoured the schemes of France.

To

To speak dispassionately of the conduct of the Dutch, we may reflect on their specious manner of reasoning. "Did we desire you," say they, "to make war, much less to bring it to our doors? And, after all, what reliance could we make on you, when a handful of rebels in Scotland occasioned the demand of six thousand of our best troops, at a time when we most needed them ourselves? If other powers do not keep France within bounds; the United Provinces may become an easy conquest, in spite of all your endeavours to preserve us." This excuse carries with it some weight: but they forget that it was their conduct at Fontenoy which brought on those consequences; that their six thousand men were of no use to us with regard to the rebellion; and lastly, that the preservation of the United Provinces, in spite of the French partizans, became at length one great object of the war: there must then be an unaccountable defection in the hearts of Dutchmen, to allow this reasoning to be good. The time may not be far off when they will solicit us to act in confederacy with them, and when they will not have any delusive reserves.

The present political contest, if we can with propriety say there is any contest, seems to be, whether, in case of another war, Great Britain ought to send her native troops abroad; or confine herself to the water, and make her money, in a reasonable proportion with other princes, fight her battles on the continent?

Happily for Europe, France is not able to support a great army, and a great fleet also, for any length of time. But as we sometimes see national efforts, which baffle all the systems of the most acute politicians; and as France may make a formidable figure both by land and sea; can we consistently neglect our land-forces? If it is necessary to preserve the independency of the Dutch; it may be also necessary to employ our troops, as well as our money, on the continent. It might be fortunate indeed to establish a system which would render a great land-force unnecessary. If it is inconsistent for us to attempt the support of great armies, and great fleets also, we may presume that Great Britain will adhere to the system which renders that force least necessary, which is most expensive.

Embarkations of our land-men may sometimes be necessary for such purposes, as neither our ships nor money can execute without them; and in behalf of those states whom

whom it is our duty, and may be our obligation by treaty to preserve on the general principle of commercial interest. But where, and in what numbers, seems to be a point which the occasion only can determine. I apprehend one rule of politics cannot suit all times, more than one medicine all distempers.

The sending great armies abroad has been, among others, a means of involving Britain in a very large debt. But it is also true, that France has been greatly impoverished by her wars. That the latter has made vast acquisitions by commerce within fifty years past, must be granted; but yet it is disputed if she is now so rich, compared with other states, as she was in king William's reign: and since money is the sinews of war, we must reckon the strength of states by their riches, compared with other states, as well as by their numbers, valour, and genius for war.

There are, I believe, some general maxims, which are necessary for every government to adopt, as far as they are practicable without adhering to a blind prejudice. If the naval force of Great Britain is her proper and natural strength, considering her situation, produce, and the genius of the people; will it not follow, that the more of such strength she possesses, in proportion to other states, the greater will be her commerce, and consequently her riches? And if she is strongest at sea, may she not command the source of French power, which is almost the sole object she has to fear?

Enquiries after political knowledge soon create difficulties, which suggest that the study of politics is no vulgar task, though we talk of it so familiarly. Ministers, like other men, are sometimes biassed by their passions and prejudices, to commit absurdities; but it is their duty to understand the interest of a nation, and their trade to manage it. Others ought to approve or condemn with moderation, as the surest way to come at the truth, without confounding themselves with the use of names and words, to which their ideas are not adequate.

C H A P. X.

The author leaves the Hague. A description of Delft. Of Rotterdam, its trade, and the British factory established there. A short account of Helvoet, and the present low state of the Dutch navy.

THE 22d of October I left the Hague, and returning back part of the way on the same canal on which I came from Leyden, I arrived at Delft in an hour, the distance being only three miles. The land here is low, and there is no particular object that strikes the eye.

Delft is surrounded by a considerable extent of flat meadow lands: this place, which is very antient, is well known for its earthen ware, which goes by that name. It is a very pleasant town, and well peopled: the inhabitants are computed at above twenty thousand. Its situation has invited several persons of fortune and distinction to take up their habitations there; but the trade of the place is not considerable. It has however a chamber in the East-India company, and a rank in the assembly of the States of the province of Holland. This city was burnt down in 1536, and in 1654 the greatest part of it was blown up by an accident of the powder-magazine taking fire; but these misfortunes have rather contributed to its beauty, than defects, as may be inferred from its present appearance.

From hence I departed for Rotterdam; the distance is hardly seven English miles. This place may well be esteemed next in rank to Amsterdam; and, in regard to Great Britain, and the southern trade of Europe, has many advantages beyond that city: the navigation of the Maese being, without comparison, more safe and commodious than that of the Texel: the air and the water are also better than in Amsterdam. The canals here being broad and deep, convey ships of burthen into the heart of the city, and exhibit a view of a flourishing trade. Being thus a rival in commerce to the metropolis, it is considered as an object of some jealousy; but the power is, for the most part, in the hands of the merchants of Amsterdam. Many of the commodities imported here center chiefly in that city, consequently the spirit of competition does not rise very high. There is indeed business enough in both cities to furnish employment to a great number of hands.

Rotterdam

Rotterdam has a further advantage: the passage of the Maese is generally open, particularly in hard winters, sooner than that of the Texel. They have great magazines of East-India goods, this city having its quota of that trade. Tobacco, corn, and rice are also considerable articles, and chiefly imported from Great Britain: they have great quantities of tallow from Ireland, for which they return flax, which is a commodity much cultivated in the United Provinces, as it will bear a high rent of land, if properly conducted.

In this city is a very good exchange, where the merchants meet, and transact their business; it was finished so late as the year 1736. Here are several public buildings of note; but the most remarkable is the great church dedicated to St. Lawrence, in which are the monuments of several persons of distinction, particularly of their most celebrated sea-officers, among whom is that of admiral De Wit. On the great bridge is a statue of the famous Erasmus, who was born in 1467 in a small house very near to the statue.

The British factory in this place is very considerable, and is, for the most part, composed of north Britons of the church of Scotland, for which they have a church or meeting-house. During the war in Flanders under the duke of Marlborough, an episcopal church was built by the contribution of the English officers, merchants, and mariners; and this is said to be the only regular episcopal church countenanced and established, belonging to British subjects out of Great Britain.

Mr. Davison, and several others of the factors, received me with great marks of regard and politeness, as well in consequence of the several letters of recommendation, which my friends at Amsterdam had given me, as the hospitality for which the factory is distinguished. Provisions here are not cheap, though plenty. The factors live parsimoniously, after the manner of the country, without parade, but with great satisfaction and convenience. Expence, noise, and shew, are indeed but the shadows of pleasure, to minds not spoiled by a habit of living in a crowd, or in pursuit of trifling amusements. The expence of eating and drinking, in the highest taste, as is ordinarily understood, generally serves but to remove us the farther from the happiness we seek. The true end of these supports of nature, is better answered by a little, than much; by a dish or two, rather than by a multiplicity; if we consider what is due to health, to a clear understanding, to moderate

passions, submissive appetites; to a virtuous cast of thought, and, in a word, to the true felicity of life.

The 27th I left Rotterdam; the most speedy conveyance is said to be to Newsluys in a yacht, and from thence by land to Helvoet. It was my desire to see the banks of the Maese, I therefore preferred going all the way by water. There are many fertile and agreeable spots of land, but the whole did not answer the idea I had conceived of Dutch industry, and knowledge of improvement as extended to every part^a. Helvoet Sluys is well known, as the port from whence the Harwich packet boats set off on wednesdays and saturdays. Though this is esteemed one of the best harbours in the United Provinces, yet the town is in itself very inconsiderable, having only three small streets, and a quay; the last is of some extent, and borders a great part of the harbour. From this place the island of Goree appears to the south, as a sandy country, and Zealand is to the north of it.

Having often heard of the naval strength of the United Provinces, so formidable at sea within little more than half a century; and as I had hardly seen a ship of war in any other port of these Provinces, I entertained some expectation of being agreeably surprised at Helvoet. However all the naval strength which I could discover, amounted only to ten capital ships: these indeed appeared to be clean and in good order, but without any modern improvement in their structure. In this particular the Dutch are said to be forty years behind the English; nor ought we to be surprised, considering how great a decline there has been of Dutch naval strength. Whether this wondrous change is an effect of unavoidable calamities; or of voluntary national defection from their antient maxims of government, the reader will best judge from the modern accounts of these Provinces. It is not one hundred years since the Dutch were able to vie with England; and, towards the close of the last century, even in the time of peace, they thought it their interest to employ between thirty-five and forty ships of war. Upon an emergency they were able to send a hundred sail to sea; it was computed, that the support of thirty capital ships then cost them annually only six millions of guilders^b. Perhaps the time is not far off when they will be

^a We must make great allowances, in all countries, with regard to those lands contiguous to the sea.

^b 550,000 l. In England reckoning five hundred men in each ship, it would be 720,000 l.

be again obliged to fight at sea, as well as by land: but if this power is departed from them, which seems to be the case, and Great Britain left to take care of herself, the larger portion of commerce must fall to her share, in order to the support of a greater naval force. This consideration seems to put us in mind of the present situation of Great Britain, and the necessity of application to our marine; not only as a counterbalance to the accumulating strength of France, but as an easy and natural expedient to compensate for the insufficiency of the Dutch.

I had the pleasure to find here a small squadron, with four yachts, belonging to the crown of Great Britain, under the command of lord Anson, his Britannic majesty being expected to embark in a few days. This sight gave me the more pleasure, as I had not seen a British ship of war for near eight years before. It also afforded me an opportunity of seeing some of my old acquaintances, particularly my honoured friend captain Edwards, who commanded the Charlotte yacht. I had no time to accept his civilities, as I embarked in the packet a short time after my arrival there.

The packets are built commodiously for passengers, and have about 14 beds, or cabbins. In these vessels there seems to be a certain degree of equality observed between the officers and men, which slackens the reins of discipline; and perhaps it is from the shortness of the passage, that there is not such a regard to oeconomy, as one would expect where no merchandise are supposed to be carried. They talk much of the dangerous navigation between Helvoet and Harwich; but at the same time confess, that only one packet has been lost within the compass of any memory. The 28th, after a passage of twenty-two hours, the wind blowing hard from the east, I landed at Harwich.

P A R T II.

MORAL and POLITICAL

REFLEXIONS

In Relation to

GREAT BRITAIN.

C H A P. XI.

Reflexions on the use of travelling. The difficulty of taking up a political faith. Thoughts on public love in a free state. Irreligion the ordinary source of national calamities.

THANKS to the goodness of providence, I am now returned into this happy island; happy, in spite of all its blemishes, compared with any country that I have yet been acquainted with. Perfect happiness most certainly is not the lot of mortals on this side the grave: the portion of bliss, which heaven has granted to this country, like the disorders arising from sanguine health, seems to create a satiety, even in those who have a claim to the reward of virtue; as if we were to learn from hence, that there is yet a better country, whither we are travelling, where only the mind can possess an entire satisfaction.

The passage of a merchant from one country into another, in pursuit of commercial affairs, ought not to be considered in the same light, as the travels of a man of letters, in search of arts or learning: but if in the course of their observation they have supported one common spirit of national affection; in proportion to their advantages of education and natural abilities, the effect will be in a great degree similar. Their own country must necessarily become the dearer to them, according as they discover the superiority it enjoys in laws and government above other nations.

tions. Being thus excited by a generous emulation, instead of bringing home the vices of other countries, they will strive to plant the virtues which are more peculiar to foreign climes, and not the proper growth of their own soil.

The ravages of time, the ruins of cities, the desolation of countries, the tyranny of kings, the folly and iniquity of subjects in selling themselves like beasts to the slaughter; with all the pernicious effects of arbitrary power, must, in a serious mind, draw reflexions on the uncertainty of human affairs. By tracing these events, as near as possible to their source, the heart will be lifted up to the great author of nature, and adopt a consistent principle concerning the general law of his moral government, by observing how vice is ever productive of misery: Though the dispensations of his providence are oftentimes incomprehensible, yet this ought not to weaken a steady persuasion, that virtue is in every region, and under every government, acceptable to him; "that what he delights in must be happy," however the face of things may appear. And to check every fond presumption of independency, though we grasp the fleeting moments, it is but as to-morrow when a curtain will be drawn over all the glories, as well as the miseries of this world. In the mean while, whether we go abroad, or remain at home; enjoy a profusion, or mediocrity of the gifts of providence, we are travelling to another country. Our noblest science, our highest accomplishment, our supreme felicity, is the knowledge and observance of that compass, whose needle points to our proper home; to those regions, where millions of blessed spirits inhabit; where the eye will be satisfied with seeing, the understanding with knowledge, and the heart with delights, of which this world can give but faint ideas.

Whether hackneyed in the paths of gain and ambition; or pursuing the delights of a philosophic and religious cast of thought; life still ebbs out must faster than we can easily discover, or deal fairly enough with ourselves to acknowledge. But a day, an hour employed in the exercise of reason and the practise of religion, is, upon the whole, preferable to an age wasted in foolish pursuits which rise no higher than this world,

The soul is ever active: this world is its scene, as a prelude to the next; some ruling principle will always possess and lead us on to action. To be idle, and to be happy, is a contradiction: but however employed, he has no mean lot who glides through life in tranquil silence, though unob-

served. Perhaps he is one of the most happy of men ; but all are not capable of this felicity.

We cannot reflect too often, that “ True self-love and “ social are the same ;” yet considering man as a unity, Self must, and ought to predominate. That is best for him which is most productive of his particular happiness, with respect to the scene in which he takes his part ; and in which he is best qualified to act with dignity, and with a due regard to both worlds. We are happy only when we are employed, and when some particular object governs the lesser passions and desires. The wise author of nature certainly intended that this object should be Himself, and that all the various connexions of our animal, our social, our intellectual nature, should ultimately terminate in him, and be subservient to this end. Here then let our enquiry rest : and since every day brings eternity the nearer, the contemplation of that eternity ought in all reason to encrease, as our hours are fleeting away. Without neglecting the ordinary course of his affairs, the merchant who is wise, will apply most vigilantly to that business in which his whole fortune is embarked.

As the peculiar happiness of this government leads every thinking subject to disclose freely his sentiments, as far as he may judge them conducive to the national welfare, may I finish my book with some indulgence of this sort ? But in speaking of public affairs, the mind ought, in a more peculiar manner, to be divested of all prepossession, or it can answer no end but to adopt or confirm a principle, which, though true, loses its charms by being founded in prejudice. If the pursuit of wisdom and virtue is the proper business of life, we ought to examine before we pronounce sentence ; and always to be diffident where we have not had opportunities of knowledge. I am very sensible that even general reflexions on political interest, belong to those who are grown grey in experience, rather than for transient spectators.

The knowledge which I have of my own country being acquired abroad, and very limited, the affairs of it now appear to me in a great measure as matter of enquiry and curiosity, as well as interest. Things ever strike us most while they are most new : the indulgent reader may consider me yet as a traveller, who gives his thoughts of things as their novelty, their variety, or their singularity affect him ; with some distinction however in regard to the motive, as well as
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some previous knowledge derived from the early impressions of youth.

It is the happiness of a free state, directed by good laws, that every member belonging to it is entitled to protection, so long as he obeys those laws. The dignity he derives from hence raises him in his own esteem: this is apt to render him inquisitive in matters of which he is not qualified to judge, and is the cause of infinite follies. Even those who are bred up in the knowledge of national affairs in England, are generally swayed by their prejudices in favour of some person or party; in the mean while the number of the judicious and unprejudiced is so small, that a man has hardly any opportunity of learning how to settle his mind.

How can it be imagined in an age in which corruption abounds, not in England only, but in every country, that only virtuous men should be in office? To rail at them, without considering the corruption of mankind in general, must render the complainant suspected of discontent, because he is not in office himself. When the influence of the crown preponderates, and the measures which are pursued do not immediately produce all the good we fondly expected; the subjects who do not receive any pecuniary advantages from the government, for others have generally the wit to hold their tongues, are apt to cry out against the court, or against the minister, forgetting that the true source of national calamities, in a free state, is the venality and impiety of the people.

It must be apparent to men who make any observations, that those who bellowed loud for liberty, and were impatient to pull down those in power, have generally given the same offence themselves, when they became vested with authority; whence it has been natural to conclude, that the people were capricious, and not capable of contentment, or, with some few exceptions, all equally corrupt; and changed their principles, or their conduct, with their outward condition.

Be this as it may, it is surprising to me how little the people of this island generally seem to know of their own advantages and happiness. Complaints are so often the subject of discourse, even among the more sober part, that one would imagine the state was under the greatest distress, and in imminent danger of ruin. “How great, say they, are the emoluments of offices, and how little is done for them! vanity and ambition, and a devotion to luxury, reign in the breasts of thousands; and the robbery of their
“country

“ country by every base artifice, is either openly counte-
“ nanced and protected, or connived at and left unpunished;
“ whilst the freedom established in the original plan of this
“ government, exists in little more than a name. To one
“ person who even pretends to love his country, there are
“ a hundred who are cherished, if not openly applauded,
“ by their friends or confederates, in consequence of their
“ fortune or address in pillaging the public. The way of
“ doing this with dexterity and address, is a science of the
“ most profitable kind. Shall we draw a curtain over our
“ nakedness, and hide our shame? Alas it is too apparent
“ to be an object of concealment! Foreigners see it, and
“ will condemn us till they perceive a change in our con-
“ dition, by the exertion of national virtue. And what sa-
“ tisfaction ought it to afford us, if other nations are more
“ vain and abandoned than this? Do we desire to put on
“ the same kind of chains as they wear, and with all the
“ advantages of our glorious constitution become yet more
“ wretched than they? Things are come to that pass, that
“ if this nation does exist, it must first fall a sacrifice to ve-
“ nality, and rise again out of its own ashes. Are we not
“ eighty millions in debt, and consequently is not our cre-
“ dit plunged deep? We are threatened with a war in a
“ few years, but what measures are taken to reduce that
“ debt, and enable us to support a war? 'Tis hard to say
“ what all this will come to. Observe the conduct of some
“ men of the greatest quality in the kingdom; persons who
“ in many respects are worthy of great honour and esteem;
“ their rank and fortune set them in a point of view to
“ make their examples of the greatest moment; and yet
“ these men indulge themselves in a passion for gaming,
“ in violation of those very laws they made themselves, and
“ by which the state is to be supported. What can afford
“ more delight to an ambitious Frenchman, than to see such
“ men promote a contempt of our own laws by the weight
“ of their example? If the great amuse themselves with
“ unlawful games, the lower classes of the people will have
“ theirs also, and the breach of laws must terminate in our
“ shame, our dishonour, our decline, our ruin. Nor will
“ our seeming affluence avail us, if by gradations of splen-
“ did infamy, our very leaders conduct us into that slave-
“ ry, under which almost every nation of the world alrea-
“ dy mourns.”

Now what impressions ought a man to receive upon
hearing such sort of complaints? Are they true in the whole,

or

or in part? Are they the effects of Party Zeal, of Prejudice, of a natural propensity in the people of this country to murmur, notwithstanding all the Good they enjoy; or a want of that very national love which is the subject of complaint; or in short, is it a compound of all these? Under our present circumstances, and the riches and liberty which we really enjoy, complaints can mean no more nor less than this; that we are become so weak as not to discern our own interest, or so vicious as not to regard it any further than the present momentary gratification. If this be true in any degree, the evil is rather increased than diminished by such liberal complaints. Some may talk in this manner, from an honest resentment of national vices; yet it is to be doubted, whether their resentment is not blended with a share of that very immorality which is the subject of complaint. That we possess a great deal of virtue is as clear as that we are a free people. But that we have not virtue enough to be so formidable, or secure as providence seems to invite us to be, is the complaint of those who wish well to their country: perhaps it is equally true also; though it cannot be demonstrated so easily as presumed. Surely it is a fault to indulge ourselves in complaints at a venture, and to sling at men in public life, though we are tender of private characters.

If to rob a nation by collusive or injurious practices, is an atrocious crime, with what consistency can we believe that those who pass for honest men have been guilty of it? We certainly ought to be tender in our accusations of this kind. Credulity does not argue any strength of judgment: the virtue of the mind ever rises or falls, with the charity which we cherish or suppress.

To consider things and persons according to the common sense and reason of mankind, "There are few, very few," says a great author[†], who have the Opportunity, and the Will, and the Ability to represent things truly. Beside the matters of fact themselves, there are many circumstances which before sentence is past, ought to be known and weighed, and yet scarce ever can be known but to the person himself who is concerned. He may have other views, and another sense of things than his judges have; and what he understands, what he feels, what he intends, may be a secret confined to his own breast." If this is generally true in common life, it must often hold, with regard

[†] Woolaston on the religion of nature.

regard to those who are charged with the Government of a Nation : their task requires great labour and abilities ; and proper allowance must be made for the imperfections of human nature, especially with regard to the fallacies of men's judgments. Hence if we ought to be slow in believing injuriously of mankind in general on the authority of dubious reports, or by opinions drawn from consequences, without regard to the motives of action : by the calumnious eccho of words against men in high office, we are very subject to err with regard to our morals, as well as our judgment. If our complaints prevent that unanimity on which the good of every state depends, we may imagine ourselves to be patriots, and yet do an injury to our country.

In private life, a disposition inclined to the submissive, is not that which makes the greatest eclat ; but it certainly is most agreeable to the dignity of human nature, because it was practised by Him who was the great pattern of human perfection. In spite then of the suggestions of pride, this rule of conduct must be the most amiable. In order to be free, is it necessary to be querulous or turbulent ? Freedom must arise from a steady, even principle, a determined resolution not to offend against our own minds, or, in other words, to adhere to what is right. To this we may add vigilance and care in our respective stations, that those who are our immediate guardians take no steps destructive of our safety.

Our compassion for Human Infirmities, is generally in proportion to the degree of knowledge we have of human nature. This consideration in good minds, will check the spirit of national complaint upon trivial evidence, and consequently restore a greater national virtue. If those hours spent in political satyr, were applied to the cultivation of knowledge and virtue, even granting there is frequent occasion of complaint, what good might we not expect ? Among the lower classes of the people, complaints are seldom without great ignorance ; and those of the higher rank generally include a secret desire of the emoluments possessed by the very persons who are the subjects of such Complaints. And of whom should we complain, but of ourselves ? What is our boasted constitution ? what our darling liberty, but that we cannot be ruined without our own consent ? Was the making complaints the characteristic of virtue, we should then be our own panegyrists ; but still they would answer little purpose till we brought that virtue into action. One vigorous

rous and well concerted remonstrance of a real evil, must be ever more effectual than a thousand vague complaints.

If we consider that this is a mixed government, and that the parts of which it is composed are numerous, we may indulge a jealousy; but hard words can be warrantable only when the iniquity is flagrant. Let us call to mind the advantages we enjoy above any people in the world, and that the flaws in some characters and dispositions, are hid by the lustre of those virtues and talents which shine forth in others. If we ever looked to our own rather than to our Neighbours faults, the state would certainly be the better; for nothing is more plain than this, that every individual, who governs his life by the rules of right reason, contributes to the government of the kingdom. We all know that government must be maintained, power must be lodged somewhere. We know that we enjoy liberty; those who doubt whether we are free or not, certainly do not know what slavery is.

The spirit of contest in the different branches of the legislative body of this island, seems to subside; and yet it is remarkable, that the words "publick debt" are no sooner mentioned, than the people start, as if they saw an apparition: talk of obedience to the laws, and they shake their heads and cry, "Alas, the laws are trampled upon." If this repose means an union of councils, it is a happy circumstance with regard to the Debt, as well as to that libertinism against which we have reason to complain. It cannot be presumed that such an union will decline into a supine negligence, much less be employed to distress the state.

It may be observed further, that many of the people of this Island, who have high notions of liberty, are offended at the name and power of a first Minister, as one of the great officers of the state is generally called. They figure to themselves that his power is very extensive; and from an observation of the strong connexions between his office and their own representatives, imagine that he may do whatever he pleases: but as, in fact, he does not every thing they think is right; they conclude immediately, that he is omisive in his duty; pursues the gratifications of his own ambition; and therefore his power tends rather to destroy, than support the common-wealth.

Opinions taken up in a hurry, and with prejudices, are hardly ever just, with regard to persons, or things. A minister, who should happen to be a man of very great parts, and very great dissimulation and ambition, is indeed an ob-
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ject of Jealousy; but if the people are true to themselves, how can such a man support himself in his power? We must be the instruments of our own ruin whenever that happens. But, on the other hand, let us consider this office in the hands of a man, who means well, whose ambition is apparently limited, and whose private character has nothing dangerous in it; and he will appear as necessary, as he is a valuable subject. Liberty, in the highest sense, has been ideal ever since the crime of our first parents, we can only preserve such a portion of it as we justly dignify by that venerable name. To prevent perplexities in the councils of a nation, and irresolution in the conduct of government, it is become necessary in some measure that there should be, as I believe there is, in almost every department of the government, a person whom they call a Leading Man. This seems to be the natural effect of superior talents, or superior industry; some distinguished power of doing good, or at least a reputation of integrity and disinterestedness: these men are not however the lords, but the servants of the public; and so long as they behave with moderation, and in the general tenor of their conduct, act with a view to the good of society, though with some imperfections, ought they not to be considered as useful, and even as essential to the well being of the state? Thus the matter will rest on the degree of vice or imperfection, that should render a minister odious or disagreeable; and in our estimate of such defects, we must compare men with men, and not with angels.

With regard to the legislative body of this nation, the first minister, for this is the term that all parties adopt, I presume is a kind of representative on behalf of the regal prerogative, and his office as such is understood to reconcile the difficulties that may occur concerning the interests and inclinations of the sovereign and his subjects. How any particular man arrives at this office, is as easy to comprehend, as that kings, like other men, chuse such instruments for their purposes as they think best; and sometimes they chuse with great propriety. If there was no such person for the crown, it seems as if there would be one against it; and might not he hurt the constitution yet more, since it is a principle established, that the state must be supported by monarchical, though limited power?

All periods of time produce a numerous train of discontented subjects, some with, and many more without reason. Partiality to our own faults is apt to make us ascribe the evils we suffer, real or imaginary, to any cause, rather than to

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our own vices and imperfections. The comparison of characters renders them odious or amiable ; but we ought not, I think, to judge from a few choice spirits, but consider what is the general turn of a people.

Liberty, national honour, or whatever idea of moral excellence charms us, never did, nor never can exist long without virtue. Virtue is the only stable foundation on which the happiness of a private man, a family, or a nation can be built. The experience of all ages proves, that every refinement foreign to this motive, must ultimately terminate in ruin. Vice may reign for a season ; but the supreme governor of the world will vindicate his authority : and though this does not always happen within the short compass of human life, yet national vices have been ever corrected by national calamities, and I presume ever will be so. It cannot possibly be otherwise in the nature of things ; for if there is a God who governs the world, with respect to men, religion must be the rule of that government. The coercive power of human legislatures can no more support a state without the superior law of religion, than due order can be maintained where the judge is as corrupt as the criminal, or the father as vicious as his offending son. The history of the world proves this assertion, and I believe it is generally found true, that some evils which happen to the body politic, have a great analogy with wounds in the natural body ; that is, that they prove extremely difficult to cure when the habit is bad, though they might otherwise be easily healed.

True politics are undoubtedly built on true religion : a nation long accustomed to be governed by laws founded in reason, and a defence of the rights of mankind, cannot submit to any other, without the convulsive pangs of expiring liberty. But it is as easy to conceive that any state may be dissolved by the immorality of the people, as that there are countries, which having once been free, now groan under arbitrary power. Let the miseries of such countries be truly known, and a free nation will tremble at every act of injustice that may produce them. What avails the superiority of this constitution, if the virtue in which it is founded, does not continue to support its influence ? The notion of liberty would only serve to delude us with an imaginary phantom ; the real excellency of it must ever be connected with the hearts and minds of the people corresponding with the laws ; their knowledge and riches being only means subservient to its support,

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Were we to lose our Virtue, in the strictest sense, we must lose our liberty also. The arbitrary power which prevails in some other nation, would be a compulsive means of employing their strength to our ruin; whilst our freedom of with-holding our assistance in support of the commonwealth, might, by our acting contrary to the apparent designs of providence, prepare an easier way to their conquest, if we did not fall by our own hands. In proportion to the disobedience of laws, divine or human, by the observance of which the constitution has been so long and so happily supported, it must tend to its dissolution; for the contrary of that which set it up must throw it down again. I think nothing can be more demonstrable than this; if libertinism is carried to a certain degree, the coercive power must become arbitrary, in the rigid sense of that word. A nation which has not virtue enough to be ruled by the laws of reason, must submit to military force, as is now the case of much the greatest part of the world. Thus liberty ceases, and when that is gone, it is no impropriety to say the nation is undone. Has ever so formidable a state as this fallen but under the weight of its own vices? Great monarchies have been dissolved only by great corruption and civil discord; so that the Almighty has certainly annexed temporal felicities to nations, as well as eternal rewards to men, in consequence of their virtue.

I hope this nation will continue great and happy, till Time shall end his reign; but if the inscrutable wisdom of providence has ordained the period of British happiness to draw to an end, by any rule of his government of which we have no experience, we must submit to the decrees of heaven: but as it will ever be in our power, I am sure it ought to be in our choice, to welcome an honourable Death, rather than inglorious chains. If we do fall, our hearts ought to bleed as victims to liberty and virtue.

The name of a free state has something divine lodged in it: whilst every one is solicitous to preserve every one, they perform the office of a guardian angel. On the other hand, where public spirit ceases to prevail in the minds of a people; how can they long subsist in that state without arbitrary power? The notion of a public spirit cannot be confined; its object is ages past, and it looks forward to the verge of time. We have no certainty how long the world will last, and little can we presume on the existence of a particular nation, however wise the government of it may be:

but

but how much greater is the probability of that existence than of the duration of any particular man's life? Man, as considered separate from the community, is in the most emphatical sense "a thing of nought, his time passes away like a shadow:" but with regard to the duties of society he not only exists as long as Time, but is partaker of a glorious immortality.

What constitutes the greatness or goodness of a man but his regard to the society? or why is a prince called good, and his people ready to offer themselves as victims for his safety, but as he honours, loves, and respects the community of which he professes to be the guardian?

The present and future happiness of individuals, as well as the felicity of the state, are all intimately dependent on each other. True politeness is but humanity refined, which ultimately centers in Charity; public love is but the same Charity adapted to the dignity and prosperity of the community of which we are members. A free government is moreover the state of nature, with regard to the equality of men and their common rights: public love cannot be separated from the idea of such a state; and as the notion of this love implies a desire of the virtue and temporal felicity of men, it is analogous with that charity which the Almighty has appointed as the great Rule of conduct, and without which he has given mankind no title to eternal happiness.

The liberty for which we pretend to be ready to die, necessarily includes the love of posterity; but an immoderate tenderness of ourselves, on the narrow principle of a vicious self-love, is injurious to posterity. Upon this narrow principle it is, that we do not consent to a small change of our manner of life, that would enable us to support the state in greater safety, reputation and splendor. Without a submission to some acts of self-denial, we can neither be politically nor morally virtuous; we cannot support such an equality of strength, nor such a consistency of conduct, as are essential to the maintenance of so admirable a constitution as ours; nor be enabled to guard against the over-bearing insolence and superior numbers of our enemies. It must needs be, that either we are not aware of the end of the course we run; or we do not mean what we say, when we talk of spilling our blood in the cause of liberty. If the former, we only want consideration: If the latter, we want every thing for which life ought to be desirable.

It is a very familiar, but no less just thought, which we find in a late celebrated writer ^a in allusion to the present state of things in this Island. There have been times of much greater danger than the present; yet if we consider what the ordinary consequences of human actions are, and by what means nations, yet more formidable than this, have come to ruin, we shall understand the force of what the author has remarked: "From their ^b railleries, on the barbarity and misery of our island, one cannot help reflecting on the surprizing fate and revolution of kingdoms: how Rome, once the mistress of the world, the seat of arts, empire, and glory, now lies sunk in sloth, ignorance, and poverty; enslaved to the most cruel, as well as to the most contemptible of tyrants, superstition, and religious imposture; whilst this remote country, antiently the jest and contempt of the polite Romans, is become the happy seat of liberty, plenty, and letters, flourishing in all the arts and refinements of civil life; yet running perhaps the same course, which Rome itself had run before it; from virtuous industry to wealth, from wealth to luxury, from luxury to an impatience of discipline and corruption of morals; till by a total degeneracy and loss of virtue, being grown ripe for destruction, it fall a prey at last to some hardy oppressor; and, with the loss of liberty, losing every thing else that is valuable, sink gradually again into it's original barbarism."

Human nature being ever the same, to form a just idea of things, we must trace them to their fountain. Self-preservation is the first and strongest law in nature. What is our duty in obedience to this law? We know that a nation is composed of many individuals, who have one common interest; that the different ranks, employments, and circumstances of a people, are only means essential to the support of the public; and that every condition of life has its peculiar happiness, as well as misery. Providence has been indulgent to us all; do we move on this great plan, and according to the orders of that providence? Do we not rather vie with each other, not who shall be wisest, but who shall excel most in vanities and expensive follies, and thus deviating from the great principle laid down, at least, prepare a way for ruin?

^a Dr. Middleton's life of Cicero.

^b Meaning the antient Romans.

C H A P. XII.

The prevalency of example. The great riches and advantages which this Island enjoys. A militia proper as the guard of these national blessings.

IT is a general, and perhaps just complaint, that whilst we aim at imaginary perfection in theory, our real conduct falls short of the virtue that is practicable, and within our reach. Superior opportunities of knowledge ought to produce superior degrees of virtue: and can it be expected, that the lower classes of the people will be virtuous, whilst the higher neglect to instruct them by their example? The reformation of manners called for by one part of the nation, and universally acknowledged to be necessary, must then be most countenanced by persons in the most eminent life; a gradation to the lower classes will be easy and familiar.

Under the laws and the sovereign, persons of high rank and great fortunes are the parents and guardians of the people: in their hands more immediately is deposited that glorious plan which our great ancestors have transmitted to us: if they are not careful to preserve it from violation, what are we to expect from the dregs of the people?

Custom and imitation generally prescribe and support the rule of men's conduct; and what have been the consequences of the modern custom of following a continued round of amusements by persons of distinction of both sexes, but idleness and vice of every denomination among the lower class? The present fashionable manner of life, to minds yet unformed, must, in the very nature of things, enervate that firm and serious cast of thought, which is the true source of virtue and public love. When the soberer duties of life become as things accidental, and which we have no inclination to attend to, it ought not to be expected, that the interest of the community will be regarded. If the duty we owe to one private family be irksome, what must be the consideration of that which we owe to a million of families? If religion is the true foundation of virtue in question; will it not startle us to think of the inconsiderable number of opulent families in this island, that inculcate the fear of God in the minds of their numerous dependents, as a principle essential to the well-being of the state?

Heaven has been indulgent to men, by endowing them with an imitative faculty; though our perverseness often converts that faculty into a curse. Example can certainly make saints or devils; and every day's observation must convince us, that there is a generous pride in human nature, which perpetually carries us to worthy actions when the pattern is set before our eyes: especially if by a skilful conduct it is brought down to the level of our comprehensions. Nothing can strike more forcibly on the minds of the lower orders of men, than the personal attention, and religious, as well as human conduct of the rich, the wise, the noble, in that vast scene of action, the public good. It is this which affords infinite entertainment to the different dispositions and capacities of men, particularly of those whom providence, by a liberal indulgence, has, in a more peculiar manner, appointed for this great work. The measures of compulsion, in a free state, cannot, in all respects, quadrate with the minds of the common people, more than with persons in high life. Public love, so little understood in arbitrary governments, must be a free effort of the mind, and brought into action by the force of a virtuous example.

It is undoubtedly true, in the present state of mankind, that the pure dictates of reason and religion are insufficient to the support of any state, without the coercive power of human laws; the assistance of those laws must be frequently called in; and happy is that people, who are obedient to them; but still example will never lose its force, whilst human nature continues the same.

I have often heard this nation described, as a country where no-body^a regards the laws. Whatever degree of truth there may be in this harsh imputation, it is certain that numbers are obliged to submit to them; or the gallows would not exhibit so frequent and so hideous a spectacle! How ought we to endeavour, by every art of Example and Persuasion,

^a The conduct of some of our people has sometimes brought to my memory a conversation of no antient date, between a certain person of distinction and a Polish lord; the latter maintained that the Poles enjoyed the most liberty of any people in the world, and might be properly denominated the only free nation: the other replied, that he knew a people superior to the Poles, meaning the Khalmucks; for, says he, these may not only kill, but also eat one another.

Persuasion, to do that which experience evinces cannot be effected by force?

It is really amazing to consider, how much the lower classes of the people are taught to break the laws of this country. The fact is, that the end proposed by many of the laws is continually defeated; and that by means so refined, that, one would imagine, here were people, who make the evasion of laws a regular study, and in which they acquire a greater proficiency, than others in making laws. Is it the excellency or defect of this constitution, that the legislature is so tender, in punishing offenders for base subterfuges and equivocations, in regard to the laws?

In consequence of the common people being thus taught the art of violating laws, liberty is frequently converted into licentiousness, or at least a neglect of that conduct which the laws require for the good of the whole community. Whatever they do not find for their private convenience, they are apt to think a violation of their freedom. Thus they neglect the cultivation and improvement of their manners; and hence it follows, that foreigners are apt to observe that the liberty of England is confined to those who have no property^b.

To trace these lesser evils to their source, we shall find they arise from others, which are of greater moment, but pass uncorrected. Can the artful defeat of the intention of the legislature be a subject of wonder, when the informer is held, in some degree, infamous: here also the want of example seems to threaten us. Informations have, no doubt,

^b I remember the story of an English gentleman, who, being just come from Paris, complained loudly of the insolence of the footmen in London, and wished to see some of them pulled from behind their master's coaches. His father, who was a master of the great science of liberty, reproved him, by observing, that though it was true, many of these men were very insolent, this abuse ought to be regarded as a natural effect of liberty in vulgar minds; that the remedy of this might be worse than the disease; for the authority which should extend to pull the footman from behind the coach for such offences, might also pull the master out of it. In opposition to this instance of abused liberty, what shall we say of the insolence of arbitrary power, where servants partake of the authority of their masters, and even in so polite a city as Paris, men in high rank and office seem to delegate a kind of arbitrary power to their domestics; and perhaps the footmen there are frequently more insolent than those of London.

been often prostituted to villainous purposes; hence the common people, who have no immediate share in making laws, adopt it as a kind of principle of honour to conceal the transgression of them ^c. Men of education and sentiment see the absurdity of this proceeding: they know that, next to the law-giver, the most valuable member of the community is he, who executes the laws with justice, and that he, who, upon a principle of public love, will not be an idle spectator of the breach of them, comes in for the next share of honour. But whether it is from a jealousy, that he who is charged with the execution of the laws will not perform his duty; or from a dastardly fear of the resentment of those who transgress; how rare is it to hear of any information being lodged by a gentleman, though he is always supposed the best judge of the propriety of such complaints, and his veracity most to be depended on?

Happy is it for us, that, if we will not exert ourselves in setting good example, we are restrained in some polite mischiefs! Measures are taken to fix some bounds to idleness and dissipation at least in that part of the day ^f, which in all ages, and in all civilized countries in the world, has been ever devoted to instruction, to domestic œconomy, and all the various duties of sober life. It ought to be presumed, that even the young and gay, will chearfully submit to so salutary a law.

It is some consolation also to reflect, that our deviations from virtue are not constant, we sympathize with the inequality of our climate; so that supposing virtue at present to be in no great veneration, it may become fashionable again. Nor ought the most serious to imagine, that we are without a large portion of it. To believe the contrary, is not only an injustice with regard to the people at large, but it would also weaken the cause of virtue, by misrepresenting the strength of her force.

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^c What false notions of honour prevail in some countries, even among the better sort of people! I have been told in Portugal, that, if the murderer of the father has taken shelter under the roof of the son, he thinks himself bound in honour, if not to protect him, to screen him from justice, till he is safely removed from such house which has been thus chosen as an asylum.

^f Act for preventing houses of diversion being opened till five in the evening.

If the motives derived from the fear of national punishment, do not inspire us with a higher sense of public love, yet we can never forget the pleasures and advantages we enjoy. We ought to make these a motive to gratitude, so as to produce the same effect. Look round, and survey the noble structures, and the profusion of their useful, their magnificent, their superb appendages in this great metropolis. Consider the flourishing state of every branch of learning, art, and science. Let us send our thoughts abroad to the numerous regions of the earth, to which our commerce is extended, and from whence such sources of wealth flow in upon us. Let us consider what an encrease of riches our American colonies produce, which is so much the more valuable, as it is more independent of the politics of other nations. But, above all, let us contemplate the beautiful face of this island, and the various delights it affords: the noble fabrics, with the several proud monuments of antiquity, in almost every part of England: gardens unequalled by any in the world; mines rich in fuel and useful metals; hills and vallies, rivers and seas, all conspiring to render us rich and happy. The Almighty seems to have made choice of this island as the great granary of Europe and America*. He has enabled us also to befriend mankind, in cloathing them in every quarter of the globe. Our wool is computed to near twelve millions when manufactured; this is four times the revenues of one of the

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greatest

* I am not rightly acquainted with the computation of our growth of corn. The bounty allowed by Parliament in one year amounted to one hundred and sixty thousand pounds at five shillings a quarter, which is one hundred and twenty eight thousand tuns exported in one species of grain only. Some late political remarks in relation to taking off the bounty are much laboured upon this principle, that it makes bread, and consequently labour, dearer; but there is not a word mentioned of the industry it has been the cause of promoting; of the improvement of the lands, nor that the cheaper we sell our bread, like other commodities, the greater will be the demand abroad; and lastly, that the price of labour, though great, might not be lowered to the benefit of the nation. It may perhaps prove more than is necessary; but it is a fact, that, among the manufacturers, they do much the least work when provisions are cheapest, and consequently were provisions cheaper, the end is defeated. Be this as it may, I am persuaded, that if the national account was stated with regard to the bounty on corn, we should find ourselves very considerable gainers by this public expence.

greatest empires ^f in the world, and which now seems to hold the balance of European Power.

But when we consider the admirable laws to which we are subject, the good government we are under, and the pure religion we profess, can we forbear exulting in the thought of being born members of such a community, or sending up our prayers in incense of gratitude, and begging that generations yet unborn may enjoy all these good things? Shall we however presume to ask this blessing; and at the same time indulge a conduct derogatory to religion, and repugnant to these laws? With what consistency can we ask it, whilst we know that immorality has subverted monarchies through all ages of the world? It must then be presumed upon the whole, that every subject will stand self-condemned, or shun those actions which tend to hurt the community of which he is himself a member; and, as far as in his power, promote the general good. Thus he will encrease his own felicity, and whilst the scene of his temporal joys is enlarged, it will naturally be attended with a firm persuasion of a glorious immortality.

There is yet one reflection which flows from a general view of our circumstances. Nothing can be held without certain conditions of tenure: happily for mankind, nations are generally apt to think more highly of themselves than of others; and in that opinion they might remain self-satisfied, if the other passions were at rest; but that seldom happens. A people distinguished among the nations of the earth, must expect to be the occasional object of envy, if not of ambition. We are led both by reason and experience to know that these passions are the chief motives of war; and that they do in fact produce wars almost periodically. It is not the politics of this nation to attempt the conquest of any country in Europe; and the waters which surround us are a great security against invasion. But do the same reason and experience teach us, that this just system of politics, or even that the waters and our ships are so secure a safeguard, under the several accidents to which naval affairs are subject, as the liberty and riches of this nation, or, in other words, the just esteem we ought to have for our selves, demand? If they are not, we seem to need a militia.

Providence, within a short period, confounded a formidable attempt against us: we might have defeated that attempt in the ordinary course of things; but if one expedient

^f Russia.

dient had failed, we should, methinks, have another at hand, on which we might make a reliance. I hope we have virtue enough left, to trust ourselves with arms: it is high time to reform, if we have not. We cannot indeed support a very large army, nor is it deemed proper we should. At the same time experience proves, that the friendship of other nations is not to be relied on; and that princes seldom do any thing for each other but upon mercenary principles. We are in the neighbourhood of a formidable power, and know their temper and disposition. Could we be sure of foreign succours upon any extremity, would it be proper to trust to the courage, or strength, or honesty of such soldiers, to fight our battles at our own doors; when property, religion, and even liberty might be at stake? And if such an ally were able to protect us, there could be no solid security against his exacting what conditions he pleased for the defence he had afforded? History, I believe, furnishes us with reasons to be jealous of foreign forces in this island.

If it is power which governs states; if no compact, or law, except the law of arms, can ordinarily answer the events which happen to nations in consequence of invasions and wars; if monarchies, humanly speaking, stand on this foundation; should we not adapt our strength, in some measure, to the worth of the object to be defended? If men were more in a state of nature, nations would suffer each other to be at rest. But I am afraid the golden age never existed since the Fall, though some nations in the world, from their virtue, their situation, and the genius of their neighbours, may have enjoyed for ages, an uninterrupted peace. In the present condition of Europe, and the corruption of mankind, what state can long promise itself that happiness? The depravity of its inhabitants will not permit it. All we can do is to live as if we desired peace; but we are neither afraid of war, nor unable to bear the inconveniences which attend it; least of all should we be unprepared for self-defence.

Numerous armies are every where kept up on the continent: there are also few places of any moment, but what are well fortified. If we have a sufficient bulwark by means of our ships, it is certainly better to learn how to use the shuttle and plowshare, than the sword; but if our ships are not sufficient to put us entirely on an equality, or render us superior in strength to other princes, there is, at least there seems

seems to be, something wanting to our security. Perhaps it will be our fortune to make war again upon the continent; a militia, were it well ordered, could in such case, be no unhappy appendage to those advantages which nature has so liberally bestowed on this island. However the notion may be exploded concerning France's aspiring at universal monarchy, it is, I believe, undenied, that the genius of that people ever leads them to military exploits: this does not promise any good to themselves or to mankind in general, but so it is: they are bred to arms, and delight in them: they are active, enterprising, and never long at rest. How often have they lost fifty or an hundred thousand men in pursuit of a point, which, if obtained, could be of no consequence to the happiness of the people of France? Besides, their desire of conquest for the glory of their monarch^c, or, in other words, for their own vanity, however fantastic a principle it may be, is generally as strong on their minds, as the jealous care of securing our liberty, is, and ought to be, among us.

But granting that a militia, such as would be essentially serviceable, might be attended with some inconveniences: it may still be asked, is this island in a state of proper defence? If it is, it seems reasonable to think we are best as we are; if it is not, there is one common interest, abstracted from all the low principles of contending parties, which calls on us to rectify this part of our œconomy.

Nations have been undone by indolence; and by their ignorance of the use of arms, as well as for want of courage. If gentlemen of property, mechanics, or men bred to and supported by labour and every honest art of industry, were taught how to defend their own houses against a foreign enemy, if such should dare invade the island, surely they could be no objects of jealousy or fear to the nation. Should we be so lost to to all sense of duty to ourselves, as to employ the means of our security to our own destruction? Such must every attempt be deemed which is injurious to the present family on the throne, or to the present constitution: but if the interest of the sovereign and his people are

^c This notion at present seems to be languid, but must necessarily revive whenever their king becomes popular, unless they change their genius and government.

are the same, that which will secure their interest, must establish his also. There is reason enough to think that in the case before us, the crown is as much interested as the people. But it seems to have been the peculiar unhappiness of this nation, to entertain jealousies on this subject, sometimes without reason, and, what is worse, sometimes with reason. It may be hoped for the future no cause will be given for suspicions, which prepare the way for national evils. There have been men, whose conduct no lover of his country can mention without sorrow, men who tired of their own happiness, and regardless of the general good, chose to run the greatest risk of being miserable, out of a wanton desire of change. And are there yet remaining such persons, whose secret inclinations are the cause of obstructing those measures which the wisdom of the government might otherwise think necessary to our present security, or to that of posterity?

The safety of nations, under providence, is their vigilance, and care in providing themselves with that which experience proves to be the most essential to their defence, that is, money, and men inured to toil and discipline. The genius of the British nation is military, yet it seems as if ease and plenty had rendered us in some respects averse to arms, and that we have more occasion for a spur than a bridle. But it is confessed that we make a brave figure in fighting abroad, for our friends, should not we at least learn how to fight for ourselves, when much more may be at stake.

Many of the officers of our army are not only persons of the first quality, but men of the greatest bravery and sense of honour. There are some of considerable property; and it seems to be an indignity to suppose that the bulk of them do not understand the duty they owe their country for the advantages they enjoy as members of the community, abstracted from their pay as officers. Our common soldiers also, loose, and immoral as they are, possess a certain innate humanity, inseparable from that courage by which they have always distinguished themselves. Is there any fear that such an army can be prostituted to any vile purpose, whilst the land is ruled by a just and worthy prince?

A standing army, such as the revenues of the state can bear, according to the present appearances of things, seems necessary even now in time of peace, not to awe the people, but for the dignity of the crown; to give it a necessary weight,

weight, and to provide for war; especially whilst great standing armies are so much in fashion all over Europe, and particularly in France. But with regard to a free and commercial people, there will ever be this material difference between a militia and a standing army; that the one are supposed never to be idle, and the other but seldom employed; consequently the state gets by the former in proportion to their labour, whilst the latter are of no use except upon emergencies^d. The difficulty is, upon what footing to establish a militia so as to remove all occasion of jealousy. If a convenient number was supported in such counties, as the situation, or reasons of state may render most proper, under the command of a lord lieutenant, who might be a nobleman of honour and discretion, and appointed by his majesty's council; such a step might perhaps give the nation a weight, which upon a general view of things it now seems to want.

At the same time if we consider the freedom of this state, and the genius of the people, perhaps the only expedient to animate a peasant to do the duty of a soldier, whenever he is called upon, is that he be under the command of the gentleman, who is his familiar neighbour, and who engages to share with him in one common labour. This perhaps is the only method to inspire him with just sentiments, and render him obedient to discipline. Those who urge that the officers of the army ought not to be admitted into the militia, seem to give greater proof of their jealousy of the crown, than of their love to the people. Might not such officers be extremely serviceable under particular circumstances^e? And were some of these such as have property in their particular counties, might they not be a means of conciliating those interests and tempers which too frequently clash amongst country gentlemen? Nor is there such a difference between scarlet and any other colour, but that a gentleman of the country, and another of the army, might agree perfectly in the same common interest. In short, whether any thing of this kind can consistently be done for us or not; let us keep
up

^d In France soldiers are employed in making roads and other public works, but that does not seem to be practicable in this country.

^e Suppose a general, or lieutenant colonel and adjutant in particular, to discipline and exercise a regiment.

up a sense of virtuous liberty, and that I hope will ever render us invincible.

Writing to the public, whatever the subject be, implies a desire to propagate an opinion, or to recommend some particular rule of conduct: but in subjects of this nature we are apt to write or read with prejudice, which is certainly not the true way to benefit by either; or, in other words, it cannot be the way to acquire just notions of things, or to render us wiser and better.

To be entirely of neither side in some controverted cases, is perhaps the only way to have a due love and respect for both; or to speak more clearly, it is the best means of acquiring such a degree of knowledge of the interest of our country as will render us good subjects and good men. If those who act ought to be circumspect in their determination, surely others who have not such opportunities of information, should deliver their opinion with care. Prejudices will ever divide mankind, and support different opinions: the people of a free state have the liberty of declaring their sentiments; nor is there any danger from thence, except from men of fierce and turbulent spirits. Common sense teaches us to compassionate the false judgments which arise from education or interest; but to observe the errors on both sides, and leave reason to judge what is best upon the whole, and what is practicable under particular circumstances, is I presume, the task of an honest and a wise statesman. The same rule is necessary in judging of these matters as spectators only. The passions being thus restrained, and the judgment left to its natural freedom, we shall require nothing more than goodness of heart to become a nation of philosophers and patriots.

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OF
PERSIA:

Containing the REIGN of
SHAH SULTAN HUSSEIN,
WITH THE
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And the REIGNS of
SULTAN MIR MAGHMUD
AND HIS
Successor SULTAN ASHREFF.

To which is prefixed,
A chronological abridgement of the PERSIAN
monarchy from its first foundation.

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D U B L I N:

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MDCCLIV.

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P A R T III.

A

S U M M A R Y V I E W

O F T H E

P E R S I A N M O N A R C H Y,

F R O M T H E

F i r s t F O U N D A T I O N b y C Y R U S

T O T H E

R e i g n o f H u s s e i n, t h e e l e v e n t h a n d l a s t k i n g o f t h e
S e f f i e D y n a s t y.

C H A P. XIII.

A chronological account of the Persian empire, from its foundation by Cyrus the Great, in the year of the world 3426, to the invasion of Alexander the Great.

CYRUS the Great, *A. M.* 3426 ^a.

THE Persian empire, founded by Cyrus the Great, was the ^a second of the four antient monarchies which have been established in the world. It is remarkable that this wise and formidable prince was mentioned by name in the sacred scriptures two hundred years before his birth; for God was pleased to declare that he would be his guide, and lead him by the hand to subdue all nations before him.

This prince was the son of Cambyfes king of Persia, by Mandana daughter of Astyages king of Media. Cyaxares,

^a I must be observed there are very few dates in which historians agree exactly. ^b The first was the Assyrian.

who succeeded his father Astyages, being threatned with an invasion by the king of Babylon, entered into an alliance with the king of Persia, and several other princes bordering on his dominions, for their mutual defence; on this occasion Cambyfes sent Cyrus with 30,000 foot to join the Medes. Cyrus entered the enemy's country, gained a complete victory over the Babylonians in the first engagement, in which their king fell in battle: he then marched up to the walls of Babylon; but finding that the garrison consisted of 100,000 men, he retired with Cyaxares into Media, to strengthen their alliance and augment their forces. Cyaxares, sensible of the merit of his nephew Cyrus, gave him his daughter in marriage, and made him heir to his Median dominions; upon which Cyrus marched towards Babylon, leaving Cyaxares in Media. Cyrus surprised the Babylonians before they joined their forces, and, marching with the utmost expedition, gave them battle, and was a second time victorious. He took Sardis, and making Cræsus king of Lydia * prisoner, possessed himself of all his treasure and the wealth of that opulent city; but restored Cræsus to his throne.

After subduing the Lesser Asia, Syria, and part of Arabia, Cyrus marched a second time to the walls of Babylon. He caused a number of canals to be made, and on the evening of the feast, cutting the banks of the Tigris, the water of that river being let into the canals, fell so low that he marched several bodies of forces on both sides of the city, along the bed of the river. The Babylonians were then solemnizing a grand festival, so that he found an opportunity of entering the brazen gates which the drunken Babylonians had left open; and taking Balthazar the king and his whole court prisoners, put them to the sword, fulfilling the prophecy of Daniel, that the cruelties which the Babylonians had exercised upon others, should be returned upon themselves.

Cyrus, after being 26 years general of the forces both of his father and uncle, at length recovered all the countries in Africa and Lesser Asia, which had been in subjection to the Assyrian empire. He then returned to Babylon, and both his father Cambyfes and his uncle Cyaxares dying, he became the sole monarch of this vast empire of Persia.

In

* Situated in the present Natolia.

In the first year of the reign of Cyrus ^c, expired the seventieth year of the jewish captivity in Babylon, and by the advice of the prophet Daniel he published an edict for rebuilding the temple of Jerusalem and re-peopling that city with its antient inhabitants: he restored all the vessels of the temple, which Nebuchadonosor had taken from thence and placed in the temple of Baal at Babylon. Upon this the Jews returned to their own country under the conduct of Zorobabel. In Cyrus's time the Persian empire extended from the gulph of Ormus and the Red-sea and from Ethiopia on the south, to the Euxine and Caspian seas on the north; and from the river Indus ^d on the east, to the deserts of Lybia ^e, the Mediterranean and Egean ^f seas on the west.

Cyrus made it the business of his reign to exercise justice, and to relieve the oppressed; governing the nations he had conquered with such humanity and tenderness, that they became his faithful subjects. He reigned sole monarch of Persia only seven years, and died in Babylon leaving his son Cambyfes his successor.

CAMBYSES, *A. M.* 3433.

Soon after Cambyfes ascended the throne of Persia; Amasis the tributary king of Egypt, endeavoured to render himself independent of the Persian crown. Cambyfes invaded Egypt, but Amasis dying, he gave battle to his son Psamenitus, and entirely defeated him: this prince flying to Memphis † his capital, was taken prisoner, and the city surrendered; on which not only the Egyptians submitted to Cambyfes, but Libya, Cyreniaca ^{*}, and other distant countries sought his protection. But the Ethiopians, and the inhabitants of that part of Africa where stood the temple of Jupiter Ammon, refusing to submit, he invaded both at the same time. The army he sent against the Ammonians ‡ was destroyed by a tempest, which raised the sands

^c *A. M.* 3426.

^d Now called the Scind.

^e The part of Africa bordering on Egypt.

^f Archipelago.

† A city of Egypt in the island of Delta.

^{*} Now called Barca in Africa.

‡ Inhabiting a part of Libya.

in such a manner that his troops were suffocated. In Ethiopia he succeeded but little better, the greatest part of his troops were destroyed by famine and reduced to the necessity of eating human flesh. With the small remains of his army he returned to Thebes, where he plundered the temples of that opulent city of all their valuable moveables, and demolished those beautiful structures.

Cambyfes became so jealous of his brother Smerdis, who had accompanied him in this war, that he sent him into Persia, and there caused him to be murdered. His sister Meroe, whom he had married, suffered the same fate, for making some reflexions on this act of cruelty. This prince had little sensibility of the laws of humanity, but substituted pride and cruelty in their place; he caused many of his great officers to be buried alive. He one day asked Prexaspes what the people said of him? That minister replied, they admired his many good qualities, but wished that he had not such an inclination for wine. "That is," returned Cambyfes, "they imagine that wine deprives me of my senses, but you shall judge of that immediately." Having drunk more than usual, he ordered his cupbearer, who was son to Prexaspes, to stand at the further end of the room, and taking a bow and arrow, declared he aimed at his heart; after he had shot him, he ordered the young lord to be opened, and his heart to be brought to him; the arrow having pierced it, he shewed it to his father, and asked him if he had not a steady hand? The unhappy parent replied, with the flattery of the modern times to Persian kings; "Apollo himself could not have shot better."

- In the eighth year of the reign of Cambyfes, an impostor resembling his brother Smerdis who had been put to death, imposing on the people, usurped the crown. Cambyfes who was then absent resolved to march against the usurper, but, as he was mounting his horse, his sword slipping out of its scabbard gave him a wound in the thigh, of which he died. This Cambyfes is supposed to be the Ahasuerus mentioned in the scriptures.

SMERDIS, *A. M.* 3441.

The usurper Smerdis, the Artaxerxes of the scripture, was the son of one of the Magi, who was governor of Babylon, and is therefore usually stiled the Magian. He endeavoured by

by all means to gain the affections of the people; and, to prevent his being discovered, concealed himself in the royal palace: but this precaution served only to raise the suspicion of the great men, among whom was Otanes, whose daughter Phedyma, Smerdis had taken to his bed. This lady finding that her husband had lost his ears, which for some offence had been cut off by Cyrus, discovered the deceit; on which several of the nobility entered into a conspiracy, and assassinated the usurper in his palace.

DARIUS son of HYSTASPES, *A. M.* 3443.

The nobility then proceeded to the choice of a successor, and Darius son of Hystaspes was elected. This prince married two of the daughters of Cyrus the Great. In the third year of his reign, he gave orders that the building of the temple of Jerusalem should be carried on at the expence of the state, requiring the jewish priests to pray for him, and to denounce curses against all who should obstruct the work.

The Persian court being removed from Babylon to Sûsa, the former city revolted. Darius in the fifth year of his reign marched his army and besieged it. He met with but little success for 18 months: at length Zopyrus, one of his generals, cut off his own nose and ears, and then fled to the city, pretending that he had been thus mangled by order of Darius: this astonishing stratagem gained him the confidence of the Babylonians, who readily entrusted him with the command of their troops in several sallies, and in a short time engaging them to confide entirely in him, he betrayed the city to Darius. When this prince took possession of it, he caused 3000 citizens to be impaled, and the walls to be demolished.

Darius next invaded Scythia with an army of 600,000 men; but the enemy retiring before the Persians, drew them into a country covered with snow, where Darius lost great part of his army, without fighting, and with great difficulty made his retreat. The Scythians soon returned this visit, invaded Thrace, and plundered the country as far as the Hellespont. While Darius was engaged in his expedition against the Scythians, Megabyzus the Persian governor of Thrace subdued the Macedonians, and made them tributary to Persia.

He then invaded India, and, as some historians say, made an entire conquest of all that country. He was soon

after engaged in suppressing a rebellion of the Ionians, who had drawn the Athenians and other Grecian states into the plot; but the Ionians, being deserted by all their allies, were entirely subdued. Darius resenting the injury done him by the Athenians in joining the Ionians, who had burnt the city of Sardis, determined to invade Greece by sea and land: he therefore sent an army under the command of Mardonius a young lord who had married his daughter; this fleet meeting with a storm in the Egean sea, he lost 300 of his ships and 20,000 men, and the army being surprized by the Thracians, it was with great difficulty Mardonius made his retreat over the Hellespont into Asia.

After this, Darius again invaded Greece, utterly destroyed the city of Eretria in Eubæa *, and made himself master of all the islands of the Egean sea. He then marched towards Athens; the Athenians sent to the Lacedemonians to join them, but before they arrived they fought the famous battle of Marathon †, in which Miltiades the Athenian general, tho' his forces did not amount to 10,000 men, not only repulsed the Persians, but entirely defeated them; many thousands fell by the sword, and more perished in the sea, endeavouring to get on board their ships.

Darius now made great preparations for invading Greece in person, and reducing Egypt which had also revolted, but died before his armies took the field, and was succeeded by his son Xerxes.

XERXES, *A. M.* 3479.

This prince no sooner ascended the throne than he marched with a powerful army into Egypt, and compelled that people to submit again to the dominion of Persia. To revenge the overthrow the Persians had suffered at Marathon, he made great preparations for conquering Greece, and began his march with an army which some historians say amounted to three millions of men ‡. Leonidas, one of the kings of Sparta, defended the streight of Thermopylæ with 4,000 men. This streight, which is only 25 feet

* An island belonging to Greece.

† A town of Attica in Greece.

‡ Some think it more consistent to read three hundred thousand; and this number is probable, considering they carried their wives and children.

feet broad, lies between Theffaly and Phœcis; and was thought the only passage by which the Persians could enter Achaia by land. Here, after losing 20,000 men, Xerxes was ready to despair of forcing his way, when a native of the country discovered to him a secret passage up the mountain which commanded the streight. A detachment went thither; and the Spartans [seeing the Persians above them, and finding it impossible to defend the post, Leonidas commanding the rest of his troops to retire, stay'd in the pass with only 300 men, which after making an obstinate defence were all cut to pieces except one man, who escaped to Sparta, and was there condemned for cowardice.

The day the battle was fought at Thermopilæ, the Grecians with four hundred sail obtained a victory at sea over the Persian fleet of one thousand sail: the weather being stormy, above two hundred of the Persian fleet were cast away, and the Grecians falling upon them before their scattered ships were joined, obtained an easy victory at Artemisium a promontory of Eubæa.

Xerxes now dividing his army, sent one part to Delphos, where they plundered the temple of an immense treasure, and with the other he marched to Athens, which finding abandoned by the inhabitants, he plundered and burnt it.

A Persian fleet was soon after sent to Salamis in search of the Grecians, but the joint fleet of the Athenians commanded by Themistocles, and of the Lacedemonians by Eurybiades, totally defeated the Persians. Xerxes was dispirited at the loss of this naval battle, and returned into Asia, leaving Mardonius behind him with 300,000 men. The following year this army was entirely defeated near Plateæ *, and the Persian general killed in the field of battle. The same day the Greeks obtained another victory over the Persian fleet.

Xerxes now disgusted at foreign wars and averse to business, abandoned himself to his pleasures, and was murdered while sleeping in his bed.

ARTAXERXES, *A. M.* 3500.

Artaxerxes the son of Xerxes ascended the throne. In the beginning of this reign Cimon the son of Miltiades, and

* A city of Bœotia, famous for the defeat of Xerxes's army,

general of the Athenians, took several cities in Thrace, recovered and restored to their liberties most of the Grecian cities in the Lesser Asia, obtained a signal victory over the Persian fleet, defeated an army of 30,000 Persians, and carried the plunder of it, which was extremely valuable, in triumph to Athens.

Artaxerxes in order to make head against Cimon, made Themistocles, who had been banished by the Athenians, general of his armies on that side; but Themistocles chose rather to die by a dose of poison than fight against his country.

About this time the Egyptians revolted, and chose Inarus the prince of Libya their king; the Athenians entered into an alliance with him against the Persians, and sent to his assistance a fleet of two hundred sail, which in conjunction with the Egyptian navy ruined that of Persia. At land they defeated an army of 300,000 Persians; but the next year Artaxerxes gained a decisive victory over the confederates, reduced the whole kingdom of Egypt, made Inarus prisoner, and put him to death. This being contrary to the articles of capitulation made with the Persian general Megabyfus, he retired to his government in Syria, raised a rebellion there, and defeated the forces that were sent against him, so that Artaxerxes found it necessary to come to an agreement with him.

This was that Artaxerxes, who by an express decree permitted the jews to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem; and the seventy weeks mentioned by the prophet Daniel, after which the Messiah was to appear upon the earth, are said to commence from the date of this decree.

Cimon afterwards defeated the Persians both by sea and land, compelled them to accept of peace on these terms, that the Grecian cities in Asia should enjoy their liberties, be governed by their own laws, and that the Persian fleet should not enter the Grecian seas. Artaxerxes died in the forty-fourth year of his reign, and was succeeded by his only lawful son Xerxes II.

XERXES II. *A. M.* 3544.

Artaxerxes having had several sons by his concubines, particularly Sogdianus, Ochus, and Arsites, the first entered into a conspiracy with one of the chief of the eunuchs, and murdered Xerxes II. in his chamber, where
he

he had fallen asleep, after a drunken debauch, forty-five days after his accession.

SOGDIANUS.

Sogdianus then usurped the throne, on which his brother Ochus raised an army under pretence of revenging his brother Xerxes's death; great numbers of the nobility followed his banners; Ochus was proclaimed king, and Sogdianus being abandoned, surrendered himself to his brother, who put him to a cruel death, after having enjoyed the title of king little more than six months.

OCHUS, called DARIUS NOTHUS, *A. M.*
3544.

Ochus ascended the throne, and changed his name to Darius. Arsites, another of his brothers, disputing the crown with him, obtained two victories over him; but the Greeks in his pay being corrupted, Arsites was forced to submit, and surrendering himself was put to death, as was Pisuthnes governor of Lydia, who afterwards endeavoured to make himself king of that province. Several others suffered the same punishment, particularly one of his eunuchs, who had the ambition to aspire to the throne.

In this reign the Egyptians revolted and chose a king of their own, but Darius at length reduced Egypt as well as Media, which had also endeavoured to shake off the yoke of Persia. Darius died after a troublesome reign of 19 years, and left the crown to Arfaces his eldest son. To his younger son Cyrus he gave the Lesser Asia, of which he had before been viceroy.

ARTAXERXES II. *A. M.* 3563.

Arfaces, on ascending the throne, took the name of Artaxerxes, and from his extraordinary memory was by the Greeks called Mnemon *. Under this prince happened the famous retreat of Xenophon thro' most of the provinces of the empire, with only ten thousand Greeks. He reigned thirty-six years, and was ninety-four years old when he died, being worn out with the distractions of his family,

* Rememberer.

and the frequent revolts of his subjects in the latter part of his reign.

OCHUS, *A. M.* 3599.

Ochus, son of Artaxerxes, concealed his father's death, and administered the government in his name near ten months; during which time he made a decree in the name of his father, for declaring himself king. When he found he was sufficiently established, he took upon him the government in his own name. He was very cruel, but a valiant prince: he recovered Egypt, subdued Syria and Cyprus, and was at last slain by Bagoas, one of the eunuchs of his chamber, who had the principal share in the administration the latter end of his reign.

ARSES, *A. M.* 3625.

The power of the eunuch Bagoas was so great, that he placed his late master's son Arses on the throne; and four years after, finding that prince disposed to call him to an account, he caused him and his whole family to be assassinated, and advanced Darius, surnamed Codomanus, to the throne.

DARIUS III. surnamed CODOMANUS, *A. M.* 3629.

Darius, governor of Armenia, and cousin-german to Ochus, was made sole monarch of Persia. Bagoas still expecting to have the entire administration of the government in Darius's reign, as he had in the reigns of several of his predecessors, finding this prince resolved to take the power into his hands, prepared a dose of poison for him, who being acquainted of the design compelled him to drink it himself.

Darius had a beautiful person, was an accomplished prince, and the delight of his subjects. He had the prospect of enjoying a happy reign, when the Grecians being all united, determined to revenge themselves on the Persians for the ravages they had suffered from them. They chose Philip king of Macedon, their generalissimo in the intended war; but he being murdered before every thing was ready, he was succeeded by his son Alexander then 20 years of age.

ALEX.

ALEXANDER the GREAT, *A. M.* 3631.

This prince having settled his affairs in Greece, marched into Asia with 30,000 foot, and 5000 horse; with this force he passed the Granicus ^b, though it was defended by 100,000 Persians, and auxiliary Greeks; and having gained the opposite shore, he soon obtained a complete victory. After which Sardis, Ephesus, and many other cities opened their gates to the conqueror, and Mithridates king of Pontus, with several other princes of Asia, submitted to him, and joined him with their forces; his army daily increased as he advanced, so that the Persian empire was not conquered by the 35000 Greeks only.

Alexander the next campaign possessed himself of an advantageous pass in Cilicia; posting his troops, so as to prevent his being surrounded by the numerous host of the Persians. Darius put himself at the head of a formidable army and marched to meet the Macedonians: he had 20,000 Grecian forces in his service; but his Persian horse having no room to act, he was defeated; and an incredible slaughter ensued. The Persian camp was taken, and among the rest of the prisoners were the mother, the wife, and some of the children of Darius.

From the death of Cyrus the Great, to the invasion of Persia by Alexander the Great, are about 209 years. During this period, the Persians confiding in their numbers, and neglecting the arts of war, became the more easy conquest of the Grecians, by whom this formidable monarchy was subverted.

^b A river in Natolia,

C H A P. XIV.

The Grecian empire over the Persians. The Roman conquest. The re-establishment of Persia by Artaxerxes. The Turkish government in Persia, to the re-establishment of that kingdom in the line of the SEFFIES.

GRECIAN EMPIRE, *A. M.* 3635.

PERSIA now became a part of the Grecian empire, which was too formidable and extensive to last long under one head.

Alexander died, *A. M.* 3643, eight years after his conquest, and this and others of his vast acquisitions were divided among the partners of his victories.

Syria formerly part of the Persian monarchy, continued in the family of Selucus the son of Antiochus, one of Alexander's captains, about 250 years.

ROMAN CONQUEST, *A. M.* 3913.

From the conquest of Alexander to that of the Romans, are computed 270 years.

Out of Persia arose the kingdom of Parthia, which included the southern provinces of Persia, and the city now called Isfahan was the metropolis of that kingdom, situated in the heart of the present Persia. This kingdom subsisted 470 years, which leaves the æra of the world, and comes 228 years into that more glorious of the birth of the Saviour of the world, when Artaxerxes the first king of his race revived the kingdom of Persia, which included Parthia.

ARTAXERXES, *A. D.* 228.

The kingdom of Persia thus restored by Artaxerxes subsisted upwards of 400 years, when it was conquered by the Saracens, and became a part of the Saracen empire.

SARA-

SARACEN EMPIRE, *A. D.* 628¹.

The Arabians under the Saracen empire, the Turks, Tartars, and Armenians, alternately possessed or divided Persia for 769 years, but this period seems to be left in great obscurity.

TAMERLANE, *A. D.* 1397.

Tamerlane chief of the Ousbeg Tartars conquered Bajazet, and subduing Persia prepared the way for another race. Tamerlane died in 1402, leaving a succession of kings till 1499, when the first of the Seffies or prophets began to reign.

The SEFFIES, *A. D.* 1499^k.

This family cannot be said to have existed longer than 227 years, when Mahommed chief of Kandahar invaded Persia, *A. D.* 1722. As the line of the Seffies includes the unfortunate reign of Shah Sultan Hussein, we shall give the out-lines of their respective characters according to the best accounts.

ISMAEL, *A. D.* 1499.

Scheich Eidar a descendant of Ali, who had distinguished himself for his piety and contempt of worldly glory; separating from the Turkish doctors, set up a new religion. He was murdered by Rustan, and left behind him three sons; the two eldest fled to avoid their father's fate, and Ismael the youngest, who was then a child, was snatched from the danger by his father's friends, and secretly educated in the province of Ghilan, in the principles of the sect of Scheich Eidar; and as he grew up, he discovered a great zeal to support them. He was handsome, eloquent and courageous.

Those who by persecution, had been obliged to abandon the religious tenets of his father, flocked to him. By their assistance

¹ Six years after Mahommed, 622 of Christ, the first of Mahommed. The Mahommedan æra is reckoned by lunar years. j

^k Some accounts make this 1508.

assistance he took several places, and led his forces to Tavis, where the gates being opened to him he entered in triumph. Alvante the king, who had rendered himself odious to the people, flying at his approach, he became master of the city without drawing his sword.

Alvante and his brother, who had been at variance, and engaged in a civil war, were now reconciled; while they were marching to join their forces, Ismael pursued the fugitive Alvante, and defeated him in a battle, in which he was killed. He afterwards obtained two victories over the brother of Alvante.

Ismael having possession of the throne, marched against the Iberians ^m, the Albanians ⁿ, and the Tartars, and obliged them to pay tribute to Persia, which for some years they had refused. He then gained a signal victory over the king of Samarchand, and afterwards engaged in a war with the sultan of Egypt and the grand signior.

Ismael was reputed one of the greatest kings that ever ruled in the east. The Persians were prepossessed with such an high esteem for him, that they considered him as a man altogether divine; therefore when they fought under his command, they braved dangers, and even death with the greatest intrepidity. He died at 45 years of age, and left four sons, of whom Tæhmas the eldest, of 18 years old, succeeded to his throne.

TÆHMAS, A. D. 1525.

Tæhmas had three brothers, each of whom had an appanage settled on them by Ismael their father, but of these only one died a natural death, one being killed for a revolt, and the other for fear he should revolt.

Tæhmas, tho' he had neither the capacity nor the intrepidity of his father, was a very able soldier; but so avaricious, that he committed very atrocious acts of injustice, for the sake of the most trifling profit; and so averse to business, that he abandoned the government entirely to his ministers, and devoting himself to ease and pleasure, shut himself up in his harram for many years, without going abroad. After having reigned nine years, without being engaged in any considerable war, he had the mortification

^m Now called the Georgians.
Shirvan.

ⁿ Albania is now called

to see his kingdom invaded by the Turks, in which expedition, Suliman the Turkish emperor made himself master of Tavis, took Babylon, and caused himself to be crowned king of Persia. After this conquest, all the cities of Assyria opened their gates to Suliman, who had also reduced Courdistan and Diarbeckir. But Tæhmas at length having laid waste the country, the enemy's army was almost starved, and obliged to leave Persia. He gave the command of his troops to an experienced general, and pursued the Turks, who being surprized in the disorder of a retreat, the Persians gained a complete victory. Persia now enjoyed peace for fourteen years, when Suliman, *A. D.* 1548, took the field with 200,000 men. Tæhmas with 100,000 men and 10,000 Portuguese, who at that time were very powerful in Asia, engaged them the following year, and gained a complete victory, 130,000 Turks being killed in the field of battle.

After this loss Suliman concluded a peace with Tæhmas, and affairs remained in that state during 28 years, when the Persian monarch died aged about 68. At his death he nominated his third son for his successor, but the grandees, not approving his choice, offered the crown to Khoda-Bende the eldest son; and he refusing it, they gave it to Ismael the second son of Tæhmas.

ISMAEL II. *A. D.* 1575.

This prince was then 43 years of age, and was prisoner at the same time when his eldest brother Khoda-Bende refused to accept the diadem. He delighted in war, and had been several years confined for the fault of raising troops and opposing the enterprizes of the Turks, who contrary to the truces concluded with them, made frequent incursions into Persia. Tæhmas though he shut up his son Ismael in prison, endeavoured to make his life as easy as possible, by sending the most beautiful women to him; but Ismael refused their embraces, declaring that for himself he was easy under his imprisonment; but could not tell whether he should have the fortitude to bear with the confinement, should he have children, and that he had rather have none, than see them miserable.

Ismael began his reign by putting to death that brother, to whom his father had left the crown. And being desirous to discover which of the grandees had advised his father

ther

that to keep him so long a prisoner, caused a report to be made that he was dead; when learning by his spies what had been said of him, he appeared again; some of his domestic enemies he ordered to be seized, others who fled with the forces, under them to the extremities of the kingdom, he pursued. The Turks alarmed at his motions, took the field, and made incursions into his dominions. Ismael being enraged at his disappointments, put those to death whom he most suspected, and prepared for a war with his foreign enemies; but while these preparations were going forwards he was poisoned, and died after a reign of two years.

MAHOMMED KHODA-BENDE, A. D. 1577.

This prince, who resided in the province of Khorasan, and had refused to accept the crown, after many solicitations, yielded, and was proclaimed king. A Very different characters are given of him: some writers asserting that his desire was to imitate those kings who had the interest and honour of their country most at heart; and others, that his whole delight was to shut himself up in his haram, and spend his time with his women. But the latter account in all probability is false: it is true he had weak eyes, occasioned either by a defect in nature, or by a fit of sickness; and this alone probably made him shut himself up in his palace; but the transactions of this reign give no indications of the kingdom being governed by a very weak and effeminate prince.

Three of his brothers, who on his ascending the throne fled to the Turkish frontiers, he allured to court, with fair promises; and then put them to death. He obtained several very signal victories over the Turks, who also took some towns from him; but not without the loss of many of their forces.

He reigned eight years, and left three sons; the two first reigned only a few months, but the third, Abas the Great, governed Persia for many years.

EMIR: HEMSE, first son of MAHOMMED KHODA-BENDE, in 1585.

This being Khoda-Bende's eldest son, he succeeded his father, but Ismael his younger brother, caused him to be murdered

murdered in his chamber by assassins, who deceived the guards under the disguise of women.

ISMAEL III, second son of MAHOMMED
KHODA-BENDE, in 1585.

Ismael the III^d no sooner got possession of the throne by the murder of his elder brother, than he thought to secure the possession of it by dispatching Abas the youngest; but being prevented by his governor, measures were taken to remove Ismael. This business was entrusted to his barber, who while he was shaving him cut his throat. The lords then present, who were accomplices in the crime, instantly killed the barber, to prevent a discovery. The fratricide Ismael died the same year as his brother, and Abas took possession of the crown.

ABAS the Great, *A. D.* 1585.

This prince is generally esteemed one of the greatest kings that ever reigned in Persia; his memory is to this day held in the highest veneration; and several noble works of antiquity yet remain, some of which I have mentioned, as the cause-way on the coast of the Caspian. He was but eighteen years old when he began his reign, and had all the qualifications of a great prince, except one: for his inhumanity tarnished the glory of his good qualities. Murched-Kouli-Khan, who in his youth had been his governor, and to whom he owed the crown, pretending to controul him, he caused him to be killed in his presence, and the next day, all the friends and relations of this man, to whom he was under such high obligations, suffered the same fate.

The Turks, since the time of Ismael II. had conquered above 150 leagues in length from north to south, and in breadth from the western coast of the Caspian to the Black Sea; also Babylon, with Mesopotamia and Assyria. Abas soon recovered the Persian dominions; made great conquests in Turkey, and recovered Ormus from the Portuguese. He gave a martial spirit to the people; polish'd their manners; and applying himself to civil government, brought the governors of the provinces, who were before in a great measure independent, into subjection.

But in the midst of his glory, his reign was rendered unhappy by an unjust suspicion of his children. He had but three, of whom he caused the eyes of the two youngest to be put out. His eldest, Seffie-Myrza, whom he had reserved for the crown, was a young man of great virtue, and filial affection: he even discovered to his father a conspiracy which had been formed against him: but notwithstanding this, giving way to his suspicions, the Shah ordered him to be put to death. Seffie-Myrza was no sooner murdered by his command, than he repented, shut himself up in the dark for ten days together, shed incessant tears, fasted and mourned for a year, and never after wore any ornaments.

To revenge himself on the Persian lords who had made him jealous of his son, he ordered them to be invited to a feast, and mixing poison with their wine, saw them with a savage pleasure expire before his face. And the officer who had readily obeyed his commands, to bring him the head of his son, he commanded to cut off the head of his own son: when he brought it in his hand, and told the king that the reflection of what he had done would bring him to his grave; Abas replied, that he was now capable of judging of his grief, and bid him comfort himself with the thought, that in this particular he was not inferior to his sovereign. Abas the Great died at sixty-three years of age, and the forty-fifth of his reign, and nominated his grandson for his successor, ordering him to take the name of Seffie, which was that of his injured father, whose death Abas so much regreted.

SEFFIE, A. D. 1629.

It is said of this prince that he came into the world with his hands bloody, and that his grandfather Abas the Great, had from thence predicted that he would live to bathe his hands in the blood of his subjects. This prediction was but too plainly verified: for he began his reign by ordering the eyes of his only brother to be cut out; and cast from a rock his two uncles, who had been blinded by order of Shah Abas. The instances of his cruelty were innumerable: he buried alive forty-four women of his harem, tho' when he was not hunting or over his cups he used to pass his time with them. He interfered so little in the affairs of the government, that the Persians would have

scarcely

scarcely perceived they had a king, had it not been for the frequent instances of barbarity which stained his reign with blood.

Before the time of Shah Abas, the children of the Persian kings appeared abroad, and had governments allotted them on their coming of age; but after the death of Sessie Myrza, Abas entirely altered that method, and Sessie his grandson was educated in the harram, which afterwards became a rule for the education of the kings sons. Sessie being shut up in the harram, where he had enjoyed no conversation, except that of the eunuchs, was taught nothing more than to read and write, and was allowed no other diversion, than shooting with a bow, and riding in the gardens on an ass: it is therefore no wonder that he was so unfit to govern. This prince by his own folly lost Kandahar and Babylon, two of the most important places on his frontiers.

He had ordered a eunuch to run an iron over the eyes of his son Abas; the purport of this commission was well understood, but the eunuch having compassion on the prince, and recollecting that the king had no other heir to the throne, he made use of a cold iron; and the prince acted the blind man so well, that the king really believed he had lost his sight. When Sessie saw death approaching, and imagined that by depriving his son of sight, he had deprived himself of an heir to the crown, he was extremely afflicted, and expressed with what satisfaction he should expire if he had a son to succeed him. The eunuch assured him that he had a secret to restore sight to the prince. Transported with this expectation, the king sent one of the grandees with the eunuch to bring the prince to him, when finding that he could see, his joy, it is said, prolonged his life till the next year. He reigned 12 years.

ABAS II, A. D. 1642.

This prince was but thirteen years of age when he began his reign. He was of a disposition the reverse of that of his father, for notwithstanding his being too much addicted to wine, and committing some acts of cruelty, he was one of the best kings of the Sessies. He loved justice, and had no mercy on the public officers who abused his authority, and oppressed his subjects. He was kind to strangers, and openly protected the christians, declaring

that he thought God alone was judge and master of the conscience; that as for himself he was only the governor of externals; and all his subjects of what religion soever, being equally members of the state, he owed equal justice to them all.

His troops were numerous: he recovered Kandahar which had been lost in his father's reign: and found the secret of acquiring a good treasury without oppressing his people. He reigned 24 years, and after languishing four months under the venereal disease, he died, leaving behind him two sons, of whom the eldest Seffie Myrza succeeded to the throne.

SEFFIE named SULIMAN, A. D. 1666.

Seffie was remarkable for his great strength: but he had not been seated on the throne above two years, when his health being much impaired by drunkenness and women, his physicians were at a loss what remedies to apply in order to restore it; and therefore laying the blame on the stars, pretended that the astrologers had not chosen a happy day for his coronation. This ridiculous opinion had its weight; the king was crowned a second time, and took the name of Suliman.

Under this prince, Persia began to decline to that low state in which she now languishes. His reign was remarkable for nothing but a slavish indolence, a savage and inhuman cruelty. When he was intoxicated either by wine or anger, he often times ordered the hands, feet, ears and nose of those near him to be cut off, their eyes to be plucked out, or their lives to be sacrificed, as if it was his pastime. In this reign was born Nadir Kouli the great usurper of Persia. Seffie reigned 28 years, leaving two sons, of whom Hussein succeeded to the throne, A. D. 1694.

Having thus given a chronological list of the Persian kings, we proceed now to a more particular account of the reign of the unhappy prince sultan Hussein, as preparatory to the history of Nadir.

of better which had suffered from the ambition of his own subjects. This monarchy, which had lasted many revolutions in past ages, seemed to be tottering on its foundation, when the news of its dissolution surprised

PART

that he thought God alone was judge and master of the conscience; that as for himself he was only the Governor of the people, and that he owed equal justice to them all.

His troops were numerous, and he recovered Kandahar which had been lost in his father's reign: and found the secret of acquiring a good name without oppressing his people. He reigned 24 years, and after transmitting four months under the venerable council, he died leaving behind him a son, who was crowned at the age of 10, and succeeded to the throne.

FROM THE

SEFFIÉ, A.D. 1666.

BEGINNING of the PRESENT CENTURY.

his physicians were at length enabled to apply in order to restore it, and the king, who had not chosen a happy

DEATH of MIR-VAIS

weight; the king was crowned at the age of 10, and look

the name of Sulaiman.

Under this prince the state in which the new kingdom was left by his father was remarkable for nothing but a savage and in-

CHAP. XV.

human cruelty. Which he was associated either by wine

or anger, he often used to order his hand to be laid

Origin of the different tribes of the Afghans, with a general

view of the revolutions of their country from the year 1100

to 1701.

PERSIA never enjoyed a more perfect tranquillity,

than in the beginning of the present century. The

treaties she had concluded with her neighbours were

perfectly observed, and secured her against any foreign in-

vasions: whilst the effeminacy and luxury of her inhabi-

tants, the ordinary consequences of a long peace, left no

room to apprehend any danger from the ambition of her

own subjects. This monarchy, which had suffered so

many revolutions in past ages, seemed to be settled on a

solid foundation, when the news of its subversion surprized

the whole world.

The authors of this amazing catastrophe, were a people, hardly known even to their own sovereigns, and have now acquired a reputation only by the fame of those nations which they brought under their subjection. These people, who are comprized under the general denomination of Afghans, are divided into three principal tribes, who like most oriental nations, derive their genealogy from Noah. According to their relations, "Japhet had three sons, Armen, Afghan, and Cardvel; the former two continued in Armenia, which takes its name from the eldest; as Cardvel, which forms a part of Georgia, is so called from the youngest, who settled in that province. The families of Armen and Afghan having greatly multiplied in process of time, the descendents of the latter quitted their country, and went to inhabit the foot of Suliman Couh*, a chain of mountains, which separates the province of Kandahar from the Moghol's empire."

This nation was formerly divided into two principal tribes; one of which lived on the mountains under the general name of Afghan; and the other extended itself on the plains, and was distinguished by the name of Balouche; but in the reign of Ismael Samani, viz. towards the end of the ninth century, a numerous colony of Afghans having quitted the country of Kandahar, a third tribe was formed in Hafarai, the eastern part of Herat. The latter took the name of Abdollees, and soon after embraced the Mahommedan religion, which they communicated to the rest of their nation, who, like themselves, had till that time professed the Magian religion^p.

In the beginning of the eleventh century, the tribe of Cligi^q, the most numerous and powerful of the three, was almost intirely destroyed by the celebrated Mahommed, founder of the dynasty of the Gaznavids*. This prince

* The mountain of Soloman: this is the Caucasus mentioned in the conquests of Alexander. But the great mountain which runs from Armenia into India, properly takes the name of Caucasus on the western coast of the Caspian; as that part of it which is on the southern coast, and runs eastward, goes under the name of Taurus. ^p Worshippers of fire. A division of the tribe of Afghans, who inhabited the mountain Suliman-Couh. * They derived their name from Gazna a city in Khorasan, and paid homage to the khalifs of Babylon.

had established the seat of his empire at Ghoznavi, in order to be nearer the Indies, which he intended to conquer. But having been obliged, in one of his successful campaigns, to return suddenly to his capital, he took only a small body of troops with him, and ordered the rest to follow by slow marches. His army was returning in separate detachments, loaded with the spoils of the nations they had subdued, when the temptation of booty raised him new enemies. The Cligis knowing that his troops must pass thro' their mountains, waited for them in the defiles, and successively defeated several different bodies of Mahommed's army.

These Afghans were however no strangers to the valour and power of the prince whom they had thus offended; but as the winter was near, they concluded that he would not attempt to revenge himself till towards the spring; when they determined to retire into that part of their mountains which was least accessible: and if their enemy could reach them there, they should at least be able to oppose him the better. This reasoning was plausible enough; but Mahommed eluded the difficulty: for he no sooner received the news of the defeat of his army, than he assembled the best of his troops, and notwithstanding the rigour of the season, he entered the country of Kandahar with such expedition, that the news of his march had not reached the enemy. The Cligis having been compelled by the severity of the winter, their mountains being extremely cold, descended into the plains, where they divided their plunder. Mahommed attacked them briskly on every side, and made so terrible a slaughter, that their whole race was nearly extirpated.

The country was at length re-peopled by a small number of families, who had made their escape into the mountains, but it was so thinly inhabited for some ages, that scarce any mention was made of these people under the following dynasty, and it was not till the reign of Temurbeg, that they appeared as numerous and formidable as they had been before their memorable defeat.

The Abdoltees having quitted the country of Kandahar 200 years before, were not involved in the same calamity. Being free from any foreign yoke, they were yet governed by their own laws, till towards the beginning of the

A city in Kandahar.

Tamerlane,

seventeenth century. The Ousbeg Tartars having then made an irruption into the province of Herat, this tribe, tho' amounting to 30,000 families, was obliged to have recourse to Abas, who then sat on the throne of Persia. This prince, who by his conquests had already merited the surname of Great, took them under his protection, and putting himself at the head of his troops, marched against the usurpers, and obliged them in a very short time to retire. Whether it was owing to gratitude, or to necessity, the Abdoltees, who had been till then independent, made themselves tributary to their deliverer. The only condition they insisted on was, that the government of their country should be conferred on none but an Abdollee chosen from among the chief men of the nation.

Kandahar was at that time under the protection of the Moghol. Abas the Great having given some umbrage to the sons of Myrza-Boyrar, governor of the province, these young lords entered into a secret treaty with Akbar emperor of Hindostan, and submitting to his government, opened their gates to a body of 5000 horse, which this monarch sent to their assistance.

Akbar kept possession of this province during his life; but upon the succession of his son Geanghir, Shah Abas returned thither with an army of 30,000 men, and notwithstanding the vigorous resistance of Assof Khan, he made himself master of the capital, the government of which he committed to one of his generals. The Cligis followed the fate of their country, and the Abdoltees having submitted, the whole nation was united once more under the dominion of Persia. In this situation things continued for many years; till Ali-Merdan-Khan, having by his immense riches excited the jealousy and avarice of the cruel Shah Seffie, grandson and successor of Abas the Great, was obliged, for his own preservation, to deliver up the fortress and country to the Moghol. Shah Seffie, it is presumed, recovered and again lost this kingdom. Be that as it may, it fell once more into the hands of the Indians, at which time the Cligis were not less than 30,000 families.

The proper name of the Moghol empire, from the word Hindos, which signifies a swarthy people. This word signifies the conqueror of the world. The Balouches having by their long separation lost the name of Afghan, it is presumed were not included.

lies, and formed the principal part of its inhabitants: but they soon had reason to be dissatisfied with their new masters. These people, according to their ancient custom, lived for the most part in tents: their ordinary occupation was feeding their flocks; but such as went into towns, were employed in the most menial and laborious offices. These circumstances, and the tribute which they paid for the right of pasturage, rendered them so contemptible, that the name of *Chigi* became proverbial of reproach among the Indians of *Kandahar*.

Of all offences contempt is the hardest to be forgiven. These Afghans not finding among people of the same religion as themselves, those sentiments of humanity which had been shewn them by the Persians, whom they considered as heretics, resolved once more to change masters. With this view they made a secret deputation to the court of Persia, to invite *Shah Abas II*, to take possession of the province.

The situation of the province of *Kandahar*, renders it a strong barrier between the empires of Persia and India; and its capital * passes for the most considerable fortress in Asia. These circumstances excited the ambition of *Shah Abas*; who immediately raised troops on every side, and putting himself at the head of a great army, after a siege of two months, he took possession of the city by capitulation in 1630. *Shah Jehan*, who was then emperor of India, endeavouring to recover his loss, sent two of his sons, who successively laid siege to this town. The first time *Roup*, one of the *Rajahs* †, planted his standards on the wall; and the second the Europeans, who had the care of the artillery, made a breach that was practicable: but the little vigour shewn by the Persian lords in the *Moghol's* pay, on the first occasion, and the jealousy of *Auring Zebe* ‡ against *Darah Shah* § his eldest brother, on the second, rendered both these expeditions abortive. It is said, that five sons of kings perished in the course of this war.

* *Kand-dar* signifies the habitation of security. Some historians think it is one of the seven cities founded by Alexander, and that the name of *Kandar*, which is given him by the old Persian histories, is an abridgment of that of *Eskandar*, by which this conqueror is known to the eastern nations. † A prince and chief of a district in India. ‡ Signifies ornament of the throne. § *Dara* in the Persian language signifies sovereign. The Latins render this name by that of *Darius*.

Thus

Thus by the repeated defeats of the Moghol's troops, and the intestine troubles which soon after broke out in India, the possession of the province of Kandahar was secured to Persia. Shah Abas being now desirous of acknowledging the services which the Afghans had done him in these different expeditions, distributed rewards among their chiefs, and reduced the tribute which had been annually paid by those people. They continued faithful to their new masters till the end of Suliman's reign, and even during the first years of that of his son Hussein, that is, so long as they were treated as subjects, and not as slaves: but the cruelty and avarice of the Persian governors having alienated the peoples minds; in the beginning of the present century the Afghans were once more ripe for a revolt.

CHAP. XVI.

Character of Gurghin-khan prince of Georgia. He is made governor of Kandahar, and oppresses that province. Complaints of the inhabitants. Gurghin-khan sends Mir-vais to court as a suspected person. Character of Mir-vais. Description of the court of Isfahan. Origin of the divisions and parties in Persia.

THE indolence and effeminacy of the Persian court was now arrived to a great height, but Shah Hussein and his ministers were in some degree awakened by the news, that the Afghans were disposed to a revolt: whilst they were thinking how to extinguish those sparks of rebellion, which might ere long blaze into a flame, the court was alarmed by a new circumstance. The Moghol not being able to forget that Kandahar formerly constituted a part of his dominions, had sent ambassadors to demand the restitution of that province, and there was reason to fear, lest the male-contents should favour that monarch in the enterprise, which he seemed to meditate.

There was then at Isfahan a prince of the family of Bagrathioni, which has often given sovereigns to Georgia. Gurghin-khan, for so he was commonly called, having been raised to the dignity of vali^b of this province, had lately tried to assert the independency of his ancestors. He had

^b Vali, a viceroy descended more immediately from the sovereigns of the country over which he presides.

had even ventured to make a stand in Teflis against the Persian armies; but being abandoned by most of the grandees of the country, who were bribed by the court, he soon came in person to make his submission to the king. Under a prince of less lenity, a step of this kind would have proved his destruction: but Shah Hussein, who had stood engaged for him at his circumcision, when he renounced the religion of his ancestors, being struck with an action that expressed so much confidence in his goodness, not only forgave what was past, but loaded him with favours, and confirmed him in all his governments.

The court being distressed what measures to pursue, laid hold of this opportunity to employ a prince, whose valour and other military virtues might render him dangerous in any other province. His brother Levan-khan was sent in quality of his lieutenant into Georgia, and Gurghin-khan, who, beside the government of this province, had that of Khermania^d, was nominated also governor of Kandahar; and as such was commissioned to pacify the troubles that might arise, and to watch over the security of that frontier. This general spared no pains to put his orders in execution: for this purpose, he raised an army of 20,000 Persians, and having reinforced it with a body of Georgians, he made forced marches towards Kandahar, when the very news of his approach dispersed the rebels.

So sudden a calm gave him some suspicion: he was not satisfied with having suppressed the insurrection, but applied his thoughts how to root it up. With this view, he made a diligent enquiry after the authors of the past troubles, and being induced from the severity of his disposition, to think that these people would never be completely subjected without oppression, he abandoned them to the discretion of his army.

It is hardly credible to what excess the violence and cruelty of the troops was carried on this occasion. The chiefs of tribes, and the simple shepherds, were equally in danger of their lives. They saw their tents and horses taken from them, without daring to complain. Women were publicly snatched from their husbands, and young virgins found no shelter in the arms of their mothers. Such horrid licentiousness increasing every day, the Afghans had private meetings, and sent a deputation to court, to complain of the

^a Capital of Persian Georgia, on a branch of the Kura.

^d Generally wrote Carmania.

the tyranny under which they groaned. Those deputies set out unknown to Gurghin-khan, and arrived safe at Isfahan; but this governor's friends having soon discovered the motive of their journey, prevented all access to the Shah, in such a manner, that they were obliged to wait for the time when there was no possibility of hindering them from having audience.

According to an antient custom, the kings of Persia always appear in public at the vernal equinox, when even the meanest of their subjects have free access. The Afghans embraced this opportunity to present their complaints: the petition which they brought with them was signed by the chiefs of the several tribes; it contained a very lively picture of the miseries they suffered, and would undoubtedly have moved Shah Hussein, who was naturally of a mild disposition, if the friends of Gurghin-khan had not stifled those favourable impressions, and engaged the prince to dismiss those deputies as male-contents, unworthy of the royal clemency.

Gurghin-khan having been informed of what passed, was not long before he shewed his resentment. The Afghans of Kandahar are divided into several tribes^d, of ten or twelve thousand families each. Mir-vais^e, a chief of one of those tribes, was also one of the most powerful persons of his nation: his office of Calentar^f added weight to his credit: but his birth, his generosity, and a certain graceful and popular air, with some indications of an ambitious spirit, were the cause of his being suspected as the author of the past disturbances. The Khan in order to revenge himself of his enemies, and at the same time by some signal piece of policy to over-awe the Afghans, ordered Mir-vais to be seized and sent to Isfahan; informing the court at the same time, that he was a turbulent man whom they ought by all means to secure; that he was the only author of the past

^a Which the Tartars call Hordas. ^b Sometimes wrote Mir-aveis, which signifies in Arabic prince lion-whelp. The title of emir, of which mir is an abbreviation, is conferred also on the chériffs, successors of Mahommed; but every emir is not a chériff. ^c There are some who are christians, such as those of the Druses and the Maronists; these last are so named from Maron their head, and inhabited mount Lebanon. ^d Calentar signifies the greatest. This officer is however charged with collecting of taxes, and as already noted, sometimes acts as a sub-governor. Vol. I. Chap. V.

past commotions, and of such a disposition as was likely to foment new troubles, which might hereafter be of dangerous consequence to the monarchy: a remarkable instance of sagacity, which was afterwards justified by the event.

Gurghin-khan having thus removed the only person, in whom he discovered all the qualifications necessary for the head of a party, began to be no longer afraid of the enterprises of the Moghol, or of the murmurings of the Afghans. He therefore put a garrison in the capital, and, satisfied with keeping his Georgians about his person, disbanded the rest of his army.

Mir-vais, far from being dejected by his disgrace, thought of drawing some advantage from it, by endeavouring to get a thorough knowledge of a court which was made the place of his confinement. The character of Shah Hussein² was too remarkable to escape him. This prince was born with that placid disposition, which borders on weakness, and consequently does not deserve the name of virtue. He had a strong attachment to his religion, and might be denominated an honest man, but so excessively indolent, and immoderately addicted to women and wine, as to be incapable of governing; thus unworthy of being a real, he was only a nominal king. It is easy to conceive then that the guardians of his pleasures were his favourites, and a council composed of the principal eunuchs of the seraglio, were the depositaries of the supreme power. This council was established by Shah Suliman towards the latter end of his reign, who not content with rendering it superior to that of the antient form of administration, at his death gave it the power, in conjunction with the great officers of the kingdom, of choosing which of his sons they thought fittest to succeed him. It was by means of the votes and credit of these eunuchs, that Hussein was preferred on this occasion, to his brother Abas-myrza³: yet far from taking umbrage at the

² Cantemir hospodar of Moldavia, who fled for shelter into the territories of the czar, in 1715, drew the following character of Shah Hussein. "He is forty years old; of an indolent disposition; intirely abandoned to his pleasures: terminating all his disputes with the Turks, the Indians, and his other neighbours, by the interposition of his governors, and by dint of money." ³ Myrza, an abbreviation of emir-zade, which in Persian signifies son of the prince. The title of Myrza put after the proper name, signifies a prince of the blood; but put before it, signifies writer; and is also a proper name, as Myrza-Mahommed. See Vol. I.

the power which had raised him to the throne, contrary to the policy of arbitrary kings, thought only of strengthening the authority of that tribunal; whether it was that he followed merely the impulse of a grateful mind, without attending to any other duty; or finding himself incapable of holding the reins of government, he was glad to ease himself of a burthen, too heavy indeed for a prince of his character.

This senate thus invested with the supreme authority, were consequently the only disposers of the royal favours and employments. Merit became an empty sound; all offices and dignities were given to those who paid the highest price; money decided every thing; and the immense riches which were accumulated by this means, seemed rather to whet than to glut the avarice of those base ministers. Every part of the state felt the effects of this disorder. The troops being discouraged by ill discipline, and worse pay, served with reluctance. Robbers infested the highways, and interrupted commerce. Placemen, impoverished by the purchase of their offices, tyrannized over the people, and were rapacious with impunity; in fine, justice was publicly sold in the very capital of the empire.

Shah Husein was perhaps the only person in his kingdom, that was ignorant of the disorder of the government. As he was buried in the pleasures of the harram¹, the cries of the oppressed could not reach his ear. The eunuchs had in a great measure brought the feudatory princes of the empire under their subjection, by investing the younger brothers with the sovereignty, in prejudice to the elder; and as the grandees of the court were, like the rest of the nation, divided into two factions, they received no umbrage, but paid an implicit obedience to this tribunal, which triumphed over the public calamity.

In order to discover the origin of these divisions, we must trace matters as high as the reign of Shah Abas I^k. This prince, whose great grand-father had usurped the throne, and who had lately added several provinces to his dominions, perceived that he could not long depend on the fidelity of his natural-born subjects, no more than on the several nations whom he had brought under subjection. He endeavoured therefore to set them at variance, that he might support

¹ Harram, signifies prohibited to men. The womens apartment in Persia, India and Turkey.

^k The beginning of the last century.

support his sovereignty by being their arbitrator. With this view, he peopled one half of every city and village of his empire with colonies chosen from among the nations most opposite in manners, customs, and character to the ancient citizens; and that the equality which he had established between both these parties should be for ever preserved, he forbid them to alienate to each other, under any pretext whatsoever, the lands which they already possessed, or those which he might assign to them. This policy had the effect which Shah Abas expected. Jealousy soon gave birth to two opposite factions, who not content with distinguishing themselves by a particular name^l, and some external marks, would neither inter-marry nor have dealings with each other. Their hatred shewed itself in a very singular manner at the feast of Hussein and Hassan^m, for then they were allowed to come to blows, and tho' it was only with stones and sticks, yet those days of festivity seldom passed without costing the lives of a great many people. These combats were not only tolerated, but authorized by the prince, whose power they confirmed; inasmuch as the animosity which they fomented, produced a mutual jealousy between the two parties, which contained them both alike within the limits of obedience.

A policy so little founded on the good of society, could not but have some dangerous effects. The courtiers instead of using this artifice as a political engine, at length took a great share in it, and it was easy to perceive at the court of Isfahan, those sentiments of aversion which divided the common people: every grandee, either for the glory of protecting, or for the advantage of being properly supported, was of one party or the other; and the antipathy which always prevailed betwixt the white and black eunuchs, was, in regard to them, what the spirit of faction was to the rest of the kingdom.

^l Peleuk and Releuk. We may suppose them as mad as those were in 1640, who adopted the tenets of the church of England and the church of Scotland. I have already mentioned this in a general way in my 1st volume, concerning the Persian religion.

^m The sons of Ali, whose death they commemorate.

C H A P. XVII.
The intrigues of Mir-vais at the court of Isfahan. He goes a pilgrimage to Mecca. Different sects of Mahomedans. He proposes political doubts to the Mollas at Mecca, which were resolved in his favour.

1707. **SUCH** was the state of Persia, when Mir-vais came to court. This man had penetration sufficient to unravel these mysteries, and to make a proper use of such conjunctures as were favourable to his interest. He made it his first business to get acquainted with the party which opposed Gurgin-khan. The steward of the king's household, and Fatey-ali-khan, grand veneur, and afterwards prime minister, were at the head of this faction. Mir-vais found no difficulty to engage their favour against their common enemy: he knew that interest is generally a more prevailing motive than hatred to a foe, or even compassion for a friend, and made use of the greatest part of the money which the Afghans remitted him, to secure the protection of those lords. The presents which he made them on this occasion, amounted to thirty thousand toman.^r The province of Kandahar was no longer divided like the rest of the kingdom by this spirit of dissension: the revolutions it had undergone, had insensibly extinguished their animosities. As Mir-vais was avowedly neither a Peleuk nor Feleuk; he made a dexterous use of this particular circumstance: for each willing to believe him of their party, espoused his interest. Having taken such wise precautions, he was not afraid to demand an audience: accordingly he appeared before the divan, and justified his conduct with such address and eloquence, that the king already prejudiced by some of his ministers, thought it justice not only to acquit him, but to grant him his favour and protection.

A man of common ambition would have been satisfied with this success; but to a person of Mir-vais's stamp, it was not sufficient to justify himself; he aspired at the destruction of his accuser. His noble birth, supported by a splen-

ⁿ There was another khan of the same name, who is distinguished in the history of Nadir Shah. Mir-chekar-bachi

P 75,000 l. It is said that this sum was paid by the Afghans in thirty thousand woolen sashes of the manufactures of Termai, a city in the territories of the Great Moghol.

did fortune, with an artful and insinuating turn of mind, operated so effectually on the mistaken compassion of Hussein, that he had now free access to this monarch, and he availed himself of this favour, and of the credit of his cabal, to strike the first blow. He always spoke of his enmity with respect, and a seeming sincerity; but he gave his auditors time to reflect on the valour and power of that general: he artfully insinuated that the government of Georgia, Khormania, and Kandahar, with which the same person was invested, rather rendered him a formidable prince, than an opulent lord. He reminded them, on this occasion, of his presumption in holding out in Teflis against the Persian armies; in fine, taking every occasion to raise the same suspicions against the governor, as the latter had excited against him, the king now began to imagine, that Gurgin-khan had removed him, only to get rid of an inspector, who by his fidelity and credit, might baffle his projects.

But it was not a spirit of revenge only that excited Mir-Vais to render the khan suspected; this dangerous Afghan had more extensive, and more exalted views. The king's effeminacy; the want of experience in his ministers and generals; the confusion and irregularity which necessarily followed from thence in the administration; and, above all, that spirit of division which excited one party continually to oppose the projects formed by the other, by means whereof their best concerted enterprizes were frustrated: these circumstances, at length, inspired Mir-Vais with the hopes of rescuing his country from the Persian yoke. His knowledge and experience of the court had given him too mean an opinion of it, to be afraid of any difficulty from that quarter, in the execution of his design; but he was too well acquainted with the valour and abilities of Gurgin-khan to neglect any method by which he might remove that general. But the most important point was to secure in his interest the different tribes of Kandahar. Tho' his superior genius, his winning deportment, his great generosity, had united the hearts of the chiefs, as well as of the common people, in his favour; yet he did not think this was enough to determine him to put an absolute confidence in them, as if they would certainly join with him in an enterprize of this nature. In order therefore to cover his design with the specious veil of religion, he took his measures to render a revolt legal, and according to the decision of the highest earthly authority.

It has been already observed, that the Persians and the Afghans treat each other as heretics. The two sects of the Mahommedans are distinguished by the names of Sunni and Schias: as Mahommed is reputed both by the Persians and Turks as the true Messiah, their difference is about the successor of this false prophet, and the sense of some particular texts in the khoran¹. The sect of sunni comprehends the Turks, some of the Tartars, the subjects of the Moghol, with some other nations of less note, and among these the Afghans, who are all followers of Omar. The sect of Schias, includes the Persians, and other nations of the same way of thinking, such as part of the Ousbeg Tartars, and some princes of the Indies, who are followers of Ali, and distinguish their sect also by the name of Adelliah². The Afghans, in submitting to the dominion of the kings of Persia, had made it an article of their capitulation, that they should not be molested on account of their religion; nor were they ever distressed upon that subject. But Mirvais resolved to make this difference in religion the basis of his design of taking up arms against his sovereign. With this secret view, he begged leave of the king to make a pilgrimage to Mecca, where he intended to consult the mullahs³; as he was now no longer suspected, and this pilgrimage removed him the further from Kandahar, his petition was granted without any difficulty.

He had not been long at Mecca, before he sent to Medina to desire the opinion of the chief doctors. The doubts he proposed to them were: "Whether it is lawful for musselmén cramped and oppressed in the exercise of their religion by heretics, to take up arms, and free themselves from the yoke." The other was much to the same effect, viz. "Whether those mussulmen were not released from the oath of allegiance, which the chief men of each family had been forced to make to a sovereign, who was a heretic, when this sovereign did not observe the conventions he had sworn to, but had made them slaves to infidels." After which, he expatiated on the sufferings of the nation from the avarice and violence of the Georgians; observing, that several Afghans had already changed

¹ See this subject in Vol. I. Chap. 31.

² Adelliah properly signifies the sect of the just. ³ Mullah signifies a guide or director, the common name of priest. Gebers. Mirvais by this name marked out the Georgians. This word comes from ghebr, which in the Persic signifies an idolater, but more particularly a worshipper of fire.

changed their religion, merely to free themselves from this tyrannical oppression.

The Mullahs did not hesitate long about their answer; for according to the principles of the Mahomedan religion, the sword is one of the means enjoined to mullulmen, in general, for the propagation of their faith. They decided therefore in the affirmative, and Mir-Vais having secretly obtained the fetfa^a, dispatched in the usual forms, returned to Isfahan. Thus far things succeeded to his wish, but this holy authority for rebellion could be of no service to him, till he should return to Kandahar. Notwithstanding the eager desire he had to execute his project, he was too good a politician to apply for leave to go home. On the contrary he affected an indifference, which entirely preventing those suspicions, which an impatience of returning might have revived, he waited to see what time would produce; when a circumstance arose which greatly facilitated his designs.

C H A P. XVIII.

The emperor of Russia sends an ambassador to the court of Isfahan. Mir-Vais's arts to alarm the court on this account.

Character of the ambassador. Mir-vais raises suspicion against Gurghin-khan governor of Kandahar, and is sent back to his own country, under a notion of his fidelity.

THE governor of Shamakie, at this time, gave intelligence to the court, that there was arrived upon the frontiers an ambassador from the emperor of Russia, charged with letters from the pope, and likewise from the emperor of Germany, and attended with a more than ordinary retinue. Advice was brought at the same time, that this ambassador, who was born in Capan a city of Armenia, had given out that he was descended from the antient kings of that province, and had let drop some hints, that he did not renounce the rights which his birth gave him to that sovereignty. These reports concerning the lineal descent of the ambassador, frivolous as they were, alarmed Shah Husein and his ministers: their puerile fears thus carried their apprehensions beyond all the bounds of

^a Fetfa, or rather fetva, the decision of the musti, when he is consulted upon any point of law.

probability, for they concluded, that an Armenian who was born a subject of Persia, and had presumed to talk in that manner, did not come so well attended, and under the protection of three princes of the same religion as himself, to act merely as an ambassador. The alarm was soon increased by those, who supposing that some parts of the reports were true, thought it their interest to magnify the whole. A Frenchman, who had been sent to the court of Israhah by Lewis XIV. for the affairs of commerce; and some other Europeans who were settled in that city, gave into this ridiculous story. They had been informed, that this ambassador threatened to cause all the missionaries to be expelled the kingdom, and therefore endeavoured to shew that the letters of recommendation from the christian princes, by virtue of which he had met with a favourable reception, were supposititious pieces; using their interest at the same time to dissuade the court from receiving the ambassador: alledging certain predictions preserved in the archives of the Armenians, which foretold that the kingdom of Armenia should be re-established one day under the protection of Russia. And in order to impose on a people naturally credulous with regard to future events, they corroborated these predictions with a French anagram taken from the ambassador's name, observing that in Israel Orii^z, were found the letters il sera roi, that is, "he shall be king."

The artful insinuations of Mir-Vais made a strong impression on the minds of the courtiers. With those of the same faction with Gurghin-khan, he laid no great stress upon these circumstances; but with those of the opposite party, "the state," he said, "was in the most perilous situation: for there was no reason to doubt, but the czar, whose power and ambition were well known to all the world, had undertaken to rescue from the Persian yoke, a nation who professed the same religion as himself. That the ambassador must be a secret emissary, who under the sanction of his character, was come to blow the coals of sedition even in the heart of the kingdom. Otherwise, why should an Armenian have been chosen? Could those princes have been at a loss to find in their vast dominions, subjects of their own, who were properly qualified for such a function? And why should this minister pretend to be descended from the ancient kings of Armenia, if it

The name of the ambassador

“ was not to obtain more credit with the credulous part
 “ of his country? But this was the smallest part of the
 “ danger. If the government had nothing to apprehend
 “ but the attempts of the Muscovites and the Armenians,
 “ the brave inhabitants of Georgia, who are situate be-
 “ tween them, would be an insurmountable barrier against
 “ the one; and as for the others, it is well known that they
 “ are more disposed to commerce than war; and conse-
 “ quently will not attempt to shake off their subjection to
 “ our invincible sovereign. But who can undertake to an-
 “ swer for the fidelity of those very Georgians? Is there the
 “ least reason to doubt, but they submit with reluctance to a
 “ people of a different religion? Have we forgot the ef-
 “ forts they made some years ago, to withdraw themselves
 “ from their subjection, at the instigation of Gurghin-
 “ Khan, who now is governor of three of the finest pro-
 “ vinces of the kingdom? In fine, are we ignorant, that
 “ Sanazarli-Khan, this prince’s cousin-german, is now at
 “ the court of St. Petersburg, from whence perhaps he cor-
 “ responds with him, while he continually solicits the Czar,
 “ to free those unbelievers from their subjection to our em-
 “ pire. The Russian armies, reinforced by the troops of
 “ one of those infidel nations, and paid by the other, may
 “ at any time without fighting march over the high moun-
 “ tains of Alburtz^a, cross the Kura^b, and pitch their tents
 “ on the banks of the Aras^c. And when these formidable
 “ enemies shall have penetrated into the heart of the king-
 “ dom, are we to presume that Gurghin-Khan, who has
 “ already attempted to ascend the throne of his ancestors,
 “ will sacrifice his ambition and interest to his duty? Or is
 “ it to be imagined, that this prince, who is descended
 “ from the sovereigns of Georgia, and a christian in his
 “ heart, will employ the forces quartered in Kandahar and
 “ Khermanra, which he can bring together at a single
 “ word, against his country, his religion, and the subjects
 “ of his ancestors?”

“ This was a plausible motive of fear. Militetzki, prince of
 “ Georgia, had been in Russia, and his only son was general of the
 “ artillery to Peter the Great. These princes were now dead; but
 “ as it was believed that the Czar had promised Militetzki to re-in-
 “ state him in his principality, as soon as the war with Sweden was
 “ ended: it was also imagined that this monarch still persisted (in
 “ 1715) in his resolution of dispossessing the usurper.
 “ ^a Mount Caucasus. ^b Formerly called Cyrus. ^c Formerly Araxes.

These arguments were very spacious and solid, to men who endeavoured to be frightened. In fact, every thing contributed to increase the general alarm; while Mir-Vais was the only person at court, who saw into the falsity of these political visions. This man had too much sense and penetration, not to perceive immediately, that these chimerical ideas had no foundation; having been occasioned only by some indiscreet speeches of the ambassador, which shewed rather his folly and stupidity, than his having any design of this nature. For how prodigiously absurd was it to believe that the emperor Peter the Great, should without any necessity deliver up the pretender into the king's hands, and that this minister, who had such a personal interest not to be discovered, should begin by a voluntary indiscretion, the execution of his design, the whole success of which depended on secrecy and circumspection?

Nothing, indeed, could be worse founded than this panic. The pretended successor of the kings of Armenia, was an adventurer, who after having successively sold coffee, and served as a common soldier, became a subaltern in the service of the emperor Leopold; but as he understood the Oriental languages, he was, at length, chosen by the court of Vienna, to sound the disposition of the Turks, in regard to the peace, which was afterwards concluded at Karlowitz. Upon his return from Constantinople, he passed into the service of Peter the Great, who in consideration of the same abilities, made him a colonel, and employed him also to negotiate a peace with the Ottoman port; to prevent his being interrupted by that power, during the war which he intended to declare against the king of Sweden.

Israel Orji, having discharged this important commission to the Czar's satisfaction, desired as a reward for his services, that his majesty would gratify him with an embassy to Isfahan. He considered that this would be the surest way to enrich himself in a little time: ministers of this character enjoying great privileges in Persia particularly that of not paying any customs. As soon as he had obtained his credentials, he took post to Vienna, and thence to Rome, where he pretended to be capable of bringing the schismatic Armenians into the pale of the Romish church, and having already obtained letters from the emperor, he procured also a brief from Clement XI. for Shah Huessein.

These were the particulars of an event, which gave rise to so many idle speculations. The numerous retinue which attended the ambassador, consisted for the most part
of

of Armenians, who were proprietors of the goods he brought with him; except some Russians who were going to Baku, and had accompanied him to Shamakie, in order to give the more lustre to his embassy. So that the pretensions to sovereignty, and the design of turning the missionaries out of the kingdom, were idle words which this minister let drop on purpose, to engage his companions to join with him in the expences of the journey into Persian. Shah Hussein being ignorant of these circumstances, was for some time dubious how to act: but the fear of giving Peter the Great any pretence for a rupture, prevailing over every other consideration, he came to a resolution, contrary to the general expectation of the Europeans, to receive the ambassador. Israel Orri therefore set out from Shamakie; and from the prejudice already conceived in his favour, the Persians paid a yet greater regard to him, than is generally shewn to persons of his character, so that he had reason to be satisfied with the honours and distinctions which he received during his stay at Isfahan.

In the mean time, the artful speeches of Mir-Vais had produced the effect which he expected. The court, continually terrified with chimeras, the natural consequence of a distemper'd government, began to take umbrage at the excessive power of Gurghin-Khan; and the enemies of that prince, at the head of whom was the prime minister, taking advantage of these dispositions, found no difficulty in persuading the timorous Shah Hussein to join with them in suspicions, which were authorized by the remembrance of what had passed some years before at Teflis. It is probable, that Gurghin-Khan would have been recalled, but that they doubted, whether he would not undertake to maintain himself there by force; or, after the example of Ali-Merdan-Khan, he might not betray the country to the Moghols: they resolved therefore to pursue a less dangerous method; this was, to place near his person one whom they could confide in, who was capable of watching over his conduct, and at the same time able to make head against him, if he offered to create any disturbance. They were not long deliberating upon the choice: this com-

Archemat Donlet. In Persie, Ichtimadoulet signifies supporter of the power. This post is different from that of the vizier-azem, or grand viziers in Turkey, inasmuch as the latter being generalissimo's of the armies, their dignity answers to that of lieutenant-general of the empire.

mission was given to Mir-Vais; and as it was of some consequence, on this occasion, to increase his credit with the people, he was honoured with the Khalaet^c, and reinstated in his employment.

Thus Providence ordained, that a fearful apprehension, arising from the idle talk of an adventurer, should bring about the invasion of one of the most flourishing monarchies of the eastern world. Mir-Vais, who from the very circumstances of this ridiculous terror, had made a discovery of the weakness of the Persian government; was no sooner returned to Kandahar, than he applied his thoughts how to prevail on his countrymen, to embark with him in the enterprize he had meditated. He was wavering in regard to the manner which he should acquaint them with his project, when a favourable opportunity offered of commencing the execution of it. This was owing to an event, which to those who are unacquainted with the difference of manners and laws between the Europeans and Oriental nations, may appear as a romance, though there is good reason to believe it true.

CHAP. XIX.

Gurghin-Khan demands the daughter of Mir-Vais. The Afghans assemble and determine to revolt. Mir-Vais by an artifice imposes upon Gurghin-Khan, and gains his confidence. A conspiracy concerted with the tribe of Tirins. Mir-Vais massacres the Khan with all his retinue, and takes possession of Kandahar.

Gurghin-Khan made no doubt, but his conduct to the Afghans had been censured at court; but he still continued to act towards them with his usual severity. Being now provoked at the return and justification of one of their chiefs, whom he had pronounced guilty, he determined to let these people know, that neither the favour nor honours which the king had granted to Mir-Vais, should screen him from his resentment, who knew him so much better than he was known at the Persian court. With this view, he

^c Khalaet signifies perfect or accomplished: a robe of honour which is given by the king's orders; it is also used for arms, horses, or the like present from a superior. The Turks call this Cuffan, and the Russians have the same word for a common coat.

resolved by some signal act to humble them all at once and the same time; and hurried by the impetuosity of his temper, he chose the most dangerous method he could have thought of; judging it the best adapted to his purpose, of making them feel the full extent of his power.

Mir-Vais had a daughter, who was esteemed the most beautiful lady in the province. The Khan now demanded her for his harram, and explained himself in such terms, as shewed he was determined to be obeyed. This act of tyranny was more than Mir-Vais expected, but his mind being already full of his favourite design, he made a proper use of this incident, to sound the disposition of the Afghans, in regard to the plot he was contriving. He acquainted the principal men among them, with his present case, by whom it was soon communicated to others. Those people have an utter aversion against marrying their daughters to strangers; but to give away as a slave, the child of one of the most powerful of their chiefs, and of a person who was a prince by his birth, to a man of a different sect, was to them the greatest mark of ignominy and reproach. There was no time to lose: the Khan pressed the execution of his orders, and they were reduced to the alternative of either complying with his will, or resolving to oppose it; they accordingly determined upon the latter. Some of the warmest and most zealous of the tribe assembled secretly in Mir-Vais's tent, and one of them is recorded to have made a speech to this effect;

“ O Mir-Vais! thy country-men thus cry to thee with
 “ one common voice: judge from thy own situation, to
 “ what a miserable state we are reduced. We no longer
 “ reckon among our misfortunes, the tyrannical taxes
 “ with which we are loaded; no longer do we weep to see
 “ ourselves stript of our paternal inheritances, by a power
 “ that does not even seek to palliate its iniquities under the
 “ veil of laws. These calamities, which would create the
 “ most sensible afflictions to other nations, affect us no
 “ longer. The loss of property is supportable, because it
 “ may be repaired; but there is no repairing the loss of
 “ honour. Recollect the odious contempt with which we
 “ are treated, by people who are indebted to our pusillani-
 “ mity for the authority with which they lord it over us.
 “ Does not this vile treatment, which will render us
 “ the disgrace of mankind, excite thy courage? Shall we
 “ remind thee of those acts of violence, the very thought

“ of

" of which covers us with infamy? Neither innocence, nor
 " the sacred matrimonial bands, are longer any barriers
 " against the unbridled licentiousness of our barbarous
 " masters. Thou knowest it well: thou, O Mir-Vais!
 " whose birth and valour have raised thee so far above
 " the common level; hast not thou suffered such treat-
 " ment, as none but slaves can think of without indig-
 " nation? What fatality holds thy arm? Dost thou wait
 " for fresh insults, fresh outrages? Dost thou wait till
 " the tyrant makes thee stoop, a second time, under the
 " ignominious weight of chains? Or wilt thou invoke
 " his guards to fill up the measure of our shame, by ra-
 " vishing from the arms of thy wife, the young princess
 " whom he demands of thee; not to indulge his amorous
 " desires with her, but glut his hatred of thee. If valour
 " does not support us to oppose this tyranny, despair will
 " direct our blows like thunder-bolts from heaven. Let
 " us retire into the mountains; and if we must perish, let
 " us at least wipe off the stain of infamy."

Mir-Vais listened without any seeming emotion, and the
 whole assembly having fixed their eyes on him, waited with
 impatience to hear what reply he would make; when, rais-
 ing his voice, he spoke to this effect: " I thank the Su-
 " preme, for the generous sentiments with which he has
 " inspired your breasts. The interest of the nation calls
 " on us aloud to be of one common opinion; but there are
 " many ways to attain the same end; let our greatest de-
 " pendence be on our courage and sagacity. The serpent
 " that lies awake, will overcome the lion when he falls
 " asleep: let us conceal our swords in beds of roses; and
 " if you think highly enough of me, to leave the revenge
 " of your cause to my care, this glorious design must be
 " kept an inviolable secret."

The Afghans answered with a general applause, and all
 promised the most submissive obedience, and the strictest se-
 crecy. " They swore to suffer their wives to be torn from
 " them, and their slaves to be set at liberty, if they did
 " not perform their engagements; and this they also con-
 " firmed upon bread, salt, their fabres, and the khoran."

We
 He is said to have been sent to Isfahan in irons. A cu-
 stom which is very significative as it may be presumed to include
 their temporal as well as eternal life,

We all know, that it is the custom of the east, for women of condition, or even those who are slaves to persons of any rank, never to stir from a certain inclosure; which none but the master is permitted to enter. Young women remain there, till they are married, and consequently are never seen by strangers. Mir-Vais now made use of this circumstance: as soon as the assembly broke up, he sent for a girl who was young and handsome, and instructing her in the part she was to act, he ordered her to be magnificently dressed, and conducted to Gurghin-Khan, as his daughter. After giving this deceitful testimony of his obedience to the governor, he made it his business to court the acquaintance of his favourites, and even of his domestics, whom he gained by bribes and fair promises, in so much that they all agreed to use their endeavours to reconcile their master to him.

Gurghin-Khan knew very well that Mir-Vais had justified himself before the divan, and that the king had honoured him with the Khalaet; these circumstances which at first excited his anger, now prejudiced him in his favour; apprehending that he had no design to create any occasion of fresh alarms. The solicitations of his creatures and domestics so far softened his resentment, that Mir-Vais had leave to appear in his presence. This artful Afghan was now to give a master-proof of his dangerous abilities. He pretended so much respect and submission at this interview, that the Khan flattered himself with having absolutely humbled the most powerful of his enemies.

Mir-Vais did not stop there: for not satisfied with being thus reconciled in appearance to a man whose destruction he had vowed, he used all his endeavours to gain his confidence and friendship. He was oftener seen at the governor's levee, than in his own habitation: he no longer importuned him with representations of the grievances of the nation: he seemed to have forgotten all past injuries, and to employ his time intirely in courting his favour. Such a behaviour, joined to the great authority he had among his country-men, with an easy address, won the heart of Gurghin-Khan, so that he reckoned him among the number of his intimate friends.

As soon as Mir-Vais saw his business brought thus far, he thought it proper time to put the finishing stroke to his work.

f The harram,

work. We have already mentioned, that excepting the garrison of Kandahar, there were no other troops in the province but Georgians, whom the Khan had kept near his person. And though these did not amount to one thousand men, yet as they were the best troops in the east, they were an invincible obstacle to an open execution of Mir-Vais's design: but this wary Afghan being fertile in stratagems, secretly engaged the chiefs of one of the tribes, named Tirin, to refuse to pay the usual taxes; the Khan was no sooner informed of this rebellion, than he ordered the greatest part of the Georgians, in whom consisted his principal security, to march that way in order to suppress it.

In the interim, Mir-Vais had directed his tribe to approach within two or three leagues of Kandahar: and as soon as he heard that Gurghin-Khan had ordered troops to march against the Tirins, he expressed the highest resentment of the mutiny of those people; so far was he from excusing them, that he enlarged upon the punishment which they deserved. This artful behaviour so totally defeated the wariness of the governor, that he made no difficulty to accept of an entertainment, to which Mir-Vais had invited him, under a pretence of reconciling to his favour two leading men of his nation, who had not as yet appeared in his presence. On the day appointed for the feast, Mir-Vais had every thing ready for the execution of his design. It was customary to admit every day into the town a certain number of Afghans, who were employed by the garrison and townsmen in laborious offices: that day he caused as many armed men, as might pass unobserved, to enter the town along with these labourers, and gave them orders, by all means to elude the prohibition which strangers were under, of staying in town after sun-set, which was the time of shutting the gates. He left nothing untried that was capable of confirming the resolution of the conspirators; and having taking every other measure that his prudence suggested to him, he waited, not with the anxious fears that attend plots, but with sanguine hopes, to see the speedy issue of his undertaking.

The governor set out from Kandahar in the morning, and arrived at the camp, which was designedly pitched near one of his country houses. There he was received with the greatest demonstrations of joy and respect. Soon after a sumptuous repast was served up: the plenty of wine, together with the heat of the day, having overcome the governor,

nor, he fell asleep in the tent where the entertainment was given; while the officers and domestics of his retinue, took their rest in the tents of the Afghans, who had invited them thither, to partake of the feast. No sooner were these unsuspecting guests asleep, than Mir-Vais at the head of fifty men armed with spears, rushed into the tent where the governor was asleep. This had been appointed as a signal to the other conspirators, who immediately entered the tents where the governor's retinue were sleeping, and instantly massacred every Persian and Georgian they could find. Their unhappy chief underwent the same fate; but it is said of him, that having had time to draw his sabre, he slew several of his assassins before he fell.

When this treacherous slaughter was over, Mir-Vais ordered the dead bodies to be stripped, and their arms, cloaths, and horses to be distributed among the bravest of his tribe; and taking to himself the cloaths, horse and arms of Gurgin-Khan, he marched towards Kandahar, in the same order as had generally been observed by the governor. It was about an hour after sun-set, when the conspirators arrived at the gates of the city. The guard deceived by these false appearances, granted them admittance, and were cut in pieces before they were sensible of their error. The flower of the Afghans, that followed at a small distance, arrived soon after; and dividing themselves into different bodies, were soon joined by their country-men, who had been admitted that morning into the town; part of them marched towards the several posts, and part advancing towards the head quarters, they surprised the garrison, already weakened by the large detachment of the Georgians, and made them an easy prey. Mir-Vais with his usual presence of mind, now caused a proclamation to be made, that the townsmen should keep within doors, where they would be intirely safe. By this piece of policy, the garrison being deprived even of this precarious assistance, every soldier and person attached to the Khan, were in a very few hours cut in pieces.

The governor, who had been informed of the plot, but with languine to see the speedy issue of his undertaking, arrived at the camp, which was dignifiedly pitched near one of his country houses. There he was received with the warmest demonstrations of joy and respect. Soon after a great repast was served up: the plenty of wine, together with the heat of the day, having overcome the gover-

Mir-Vais now convened the chief men of his tribe. C H A P. XX. made then sensible of his situation, and was essential to safety, representing to them what they had done. Mir-Vais engages the inhabitants of Kandahar to join with him in the rebellion. Famous retreat of the Georgians. Mir-Vais makes himself master of the streight of Zebil. The Persian court orders troops to be levied, and sends deputies to Kandahar.

THE day after the taking of Kandahar, Mir-Vais yet depending more on cunning than strength, caused the principal inhabitants to be summoned early in the morning; and after having quieted their fears by his soft and obliging behaviour, he protested to them, that ambition had no share in his undertaking; that his only aim was to free his country from the yoke under which it had so long groaned: he then expatiated upon what the Afghans in general, and himself in particular had suffered for some years; and very artfully treating the interests of the assembly as his own, he thus continued: "You may judge from my sentiments, and every circumstance of my conduct, that my design is not to oppress, but to free you from slavery. The Afghans will always esteem you as the companions of their past servitude, and present felicity. Do not be afraid that the happiness we are now going to enjoy, will ever be interrupted. The tyrant Gurghin-Khan is no more; he was the only person among the Persians that deserved the name of a soldier: can you imagine they will ever dare to undertake what the emperors of India have attempted in vain, with more troops than there are stones in our walls? 'Tis only by motion that water is purified; an enemy immersed in luxury is far from being formidable. If there are any amongst you that have not the courage to enjoy this precious gift of liberty, which is dropt down to you from heaven, let him declare himself: no harm shall be done to him; he shall be permitted to go in search of some new tyrant beyond the frontier of this happy state." The inhabitants not expecting such mild propositions, answered with loud praises and acclamations. They all concurred in offering to expose their lives and fortunes in support of the common cause; they swore eternal fidelity to him, and begged him to continue his labours to terminate an enterprize, on the success of which the public felicity depended.

Mir-Vais

Mir-Vais now convened the chief men of his tribe: he made them sensible, that in such conjunctures, unanimity is essential to safety, representing to them what they had to hope or fear, from the good or bad understanding in which they might live with the inhabitants; and after joining authority to persuasion, he forbade them to give the least offence or molestation to the people. In order to secure his conquest, he took every step that prudence dictated; whilst necessity supplied the place of experience. The arms which he found in the town, he distributed among the bravest and best affectioned of his men; he gave orders for filling the magazines; for repairing the fortifications; and putting the artillery in order. Workmen were employed night and day, in making gun-powder and fire-arms: he sent messengers to the different heads of the tribes, informing them of his success, and inviting them to come and join him with all expedition.

Three days had elapsed since the governor's death, when the centinels descried from the ramparts a considerable body of cavalry; this was the detachment of Georgians, who, ignorant of what had passed, were coming to the city, loaded with the spoils of the rebels. As their return was expected, proper orders were given for their reception; they were suffered to advance within musket-shot, when the cannon of the town was discharged at them; so that they immediately conjectured that the place had changed masters. Mir-Vais thought this a good opportunity for establishing the reputation of his arms; he accordingly marched out at the head of five or six thousand horse, intending to cut off the retreat of the Georgians; but he soon perceived, that he had to do with troops better disciplined, and more inured to war, than his Afghans. The Georgians quitting their booty, forced their way sword in hand, and passed the defile of Zebil. After fighting their way thro' the country for the space of eight days, with an amazing intrepidity, they marched out of the province. What the Georgians suffered in this retreat, as well through want of provisions and forage, as the frequent attacks of their enemies, is hardly credible; but their courage was invincible.

The

* All the Persians and Georgians in the town having been massacred, and the Patens and Afghans of the open country favouring the enterprize. Tho' this may appear improbable to an European, yet it is easy to be reconciled in a country but thinly inhabited.

The Afghans made five different attacks upon them in one day, and notwithstanding the great superiority of their numbers, they were always repulsed; insomuch that they lost above two thousand men in these different engagements. As an instance of the resolution of the Georgians, it is related, that they swam their horses over a considerable river, within three leagues of the defile of Zebil, on the side of Kandahar: one of them, who was dismounted, seeing an Afghan riding towards him in full speed, turned back to meet him, and holding out to him, with one hand, his sabre, as if he intended to surrender, with the other, he shot him thro' the head, with a pistol; then leaping upon the dead man's horse, he plunged into the river, which he crossed under the incessant fire of the enemy, who were amazed at his resolution. All the advantage that Mir-Vais reaped from this expedition, was the making himself master of the defile of Zebil. This streight is on the side of Persia, as that of Cabul is towards India, and these are the only passes thro' the mountains with which the province of Kandahar is surrounded. The Afghan chief, who had now so lately experienced, that valour alone is not sufficient in carrying on a war, left troops to guard these narrow passes, and applied himself to discipline his men, and also to gain the other towns of the province; in hopes, that by their means, together with the alliances which he intended to conclude with his neighbours, he should be able to withstand the forces that might be sent against him.

In the mean time the Georgians marching back into Persia, spread the news of this revolt, which soon reached Ifsahan. The persian court being sensible of their own weakness, and of the difficulty of penetrating thro' the mountains with an army, had likewise reason to apprehend, lest if they should gain any advantage by force of arms over the Afghans, these people might be tempted a second time to surrender the country to the Moghol. In this critical conjuncture, new levies of troops were ordered; but before they proceeded to open force, they thought proper to try the ways of negotiation.

Mahommed Geani Khan was the person chosen for this deputation; accordingly he set out for Kandahar, where he used every art that the love of his country suggested to him, to prevail upon the rebel-chief to return to his duty; and having a particular intimacy with Mir-Vais, he addressed him in this manner: "My friendship for thee would not permit me to see the storm gathering over thy head,
" without

“ without endeavouring to avert it. I have prostrated myself with tears in my eyes, and bitter grief in my soul, at the threshold of the palace of their sublime majesties, who, reluctant to punish, have let fall the arm that was lifted up against thee in their wrath; they have given me leave to come and speak to thee; and I am commissioned by them to tell thee, that tho’ they are justly offended at the death of the Khan; yet they forgive this crime, as thou only hast anticipated a punishment which their justice was preparing for him: they consider what is since past only as a necessary consequence of that action: thus the storm is blown over; do not therefore excite new troubles, but restore Kandahar to its true defenders; and by this mark of submission, merit the favours with which the crown is ready to distinguish thee.”

Mahommed Geani Khan continuing his speech, added menaces to promises, when Mir-Vais, who was afraid lest this discourse should make some impression on the minds of the hearers, silenced him abruptly to this effect: “ Deceitful man, what do all these artful subterfuges avail? Dost thou imagine that wisdom dwells only in the bosom of effeminacy, and hath never passed the mountains with which these states are surrounded? Know then, that all those who have here listened to thee, are as sensible, as myself, of the snares in which thou art endeavouring to entangle us. Let thy king either raise or let fall his arm, as he pleases; they are slaves, and not musklemen, who are afraid of the blow. If he were as formidable, as thou wouldst make us believe, it is with deeds, and not with empty words, he would oppose our just designs.”

Having thus spoke, Mir-Vais ordered the deputy to be sent to prison: whether he thought by this means to prevent the court from receiving intelligence, and to gain time for making greater preparations; or intended by this act of violence, to cut off all hopes of reconciliation with the Persians; certain it is, that the detention of Mahommed Geani Khan, and the exactness with which all the passes were guarded, hindered the court from being informed of what had passed. The ministers being uneasy at not hearing the success of this deputation, resolved at length to venture up-

^b For his majesty; the Oriental way of expressing themselves as a mark of greater respect to their prince. It may be observed, that the Persians use the third person plural even to private persons in common discourse.

on a second. As the lieutenant of Mahommed Khan, governor of Herat, had performed the pilgrimage to Mecca in company with Mir-Vais, and had contracted a strict friendship with him; they were induced to imagine that such a person would be less suspected, and more agreeable to him, than any other. The new deputy arrived, and explained the subject of his commission but Mir-Vais told him in an angry tone, "Thou mayest thank thy good fortune in being my fellow-traveller; and the laws of hospitality, by which thou art intitled in my house to bread and salt: were it not for these circumstances, thou shouldst be no longer in a condition to make such base proposals to men who are free. Slave to a king who is going to lose his royalty, listen to what I declare to thee this day. The victory comes from God, and this Victory is nearⁱ. The impure worship of the followers of Ali, has too long infected the most fertile provinces of Asia. Heaven has at length declared against the Persians: the Afghans, who are charged with the divine vengeance, will not sheath their swords, till they have destroyed this prince and extirpated his nation." After this menacing speech, which seemed in some degree prophetic, Mir-Vais contented himself with detaining the deputy, but did not choose to violate, in the person of his old acquaintance and friend, those laws which he had so little respected in that of the deputy of his sovereign.

C H A P. XXI.

The Persian court raises troops, and sends deputies to Kandahar. Defeat of the Khans of Herat and Tavis. Khosroff Khan is sent against the Afghans: obtains a victory over them, and lays siege to Kandahar. His defeat and death. Another Persian army defeated. The province of Kandahar entirely subjected by Mir-Vais, who dies in 1715.

1710. **T**HE court at length perceiving that there were no hopes of recovering Kandahar by negotiation, gave orders to the Khan of Herat to march against the rebels, at the head of 15000 horse. Mir-Vais who was well acquainted with the difference between the Persians and Georgians, went to meet him with only 5000 horse, which

ⁱ A passage of the khoran.

which he had assembled in a hurry, upon the news of the enemy's approach. The Afghans having fired some field pieces, the Persians were struck with a panic, and did not wait for the first onset, but flying before their enemies, gave themselves up to slaughter; and after a grievous carnage, the Afghans returned to their camp, enriched with spoils. This action, which was followed by two or three others of the like nature, in the space of eighteen months, gave the rebels such a contempt for their enemy, that they attacked them upon every occasion, without regarding their numbers. Of this there was a melancholy instance in Mahommed Khan governor of Tavis. This general by the king's orders, having marched in September this year, against the rebels, at the head of 5000 horse, met with such a warm reception from their van-guard, consisting only of 500 Afghan cavalry, that he had above 1000 men killed and wounded, and was taken prisoner himself with three of his sons.

The bad success of these expeditions, induced the court to make preparations for the continuation of the war with more order and precaution. They had raised a considerable army, and had given the command of it to Khosroff Khan * a Georgian, which was a very natural piece of policy. This prince, entrusted with the care of revenging the cause of his own country-men, as well as that of his sovereign, marched into Khorasan, and from thence advancing eastward, in the month of November, he pitched his tents in the neighbourhood of Farra ¹; a city not far distant from the enemy's country. Valour without prudence does not merit the name of virtue in a general. Khosroff Khan therefore resolved to wait in this neighbourhood, in order to be informed of the progress and forces of the rebels. Accordingly he made inquiries into the state of their troops, the nature of the country, and of their strong holds; and sacrificing his private resentments to the public good, he agreed to a suspension of arms, and entered into a negotiation, to try if any method could be found to prevent the effusion of blood. The king's army consisting of 30,000 Persians and 1200 Georgians, advanced in good order towards the strait of Zebil; from whence part of these Georgians

* This word is generally translated lord or governor; but kai in the antient Persic signifies a giant, and metaphorically a king, or great captain.

¹ A square town, about half a league in circumference, surrounded with a mud-wall. It stands in a fertile country, abundantly supplied with water.

had made the famous retreat already mentioned. The number of the Afghan army was inferior to that of their enemy. All these troops, according to the custom of that part of the east, were composed of cavalry. Mir-Vais did not judge proper to make his men dismount, and being sensible how difficult it would be for cavalry to act in these defiles, he resolved to quit his post, and retire to the river Belese, about three leagues distant, and there dispute the passage.

The Persians greatly surprized to find the passes unguarded, at length discovered the enemy, who bordered the opposite banks of the river. Khosroff Khan was the first who plunged in, the rest immediately followed the example of their general, and swam their horses over; the Afghans astonished at their resolution, and being charged with equal intrepidity, gave way, and retired in disorder. The Georgian prince made a proper use of his victory: for his troops were scarce returned from pursuing the enemy, than he ordered them to march forthwith to invest Kandahar. The Afghans having had no time to recover their courage, nor accustomed to a regular manner of waging war, were amazed at this first disgrace: what added to their confusion was the absence of Mir-Vais, who not confiding in them sufficiently to lock himself up in the town, kept the field with the shattered remains of his army. Things being thus situated, they sent deputies to Khosroff Khan, with proposals to deliver up the place, on condition that he would preserve their lives, their liberty, and fortunes.

This general had it now in his power with a single word to terminate this destructive war; but his prudence forsook him. Transported by his resentment, and elated with his success, he thought it beneath his dignity to grant a capitulation to rebels, whom he had so lately vanquished. He therefore gave them to understand, that they must submit at discretion. Death appearing more eligible than slavery; the Afghans would not listen to so dangerous a proposal, and the Khan began to attack the town.

In the mean time the impressions of fear were in a great measure worn out, and the number of Mir-Vais's troops greatly augmented. There is a large country south of Kandahar, which modern geographers distinguish by the name of Mackeran; it is bounded by Kerman on the west; a chain of mountains separates it towards the east from the Moghol's empire, and the rest of it is inclosed by the Indian ocean. The Balouches, a fierce and warlike people, descended, as already mentioned, from the Afghans,
are

are dispersed throughout these deserts, which are reckoned a province of Persia. Mir-Vais had sent a deputation to these people, and found no difficulty in persuading them to engage in a confederacy, on the success of which their common liberty depended. At the same time, the Tirins^m enrolled themselves in great numbers under Mir-Vais's banners, who was now grown wiser by his mistakes, and resolved not to expose himself again to the hazard of an unequal combat. Cunning and stratagem which had been so often serviceable to him, were now his last resource; and he determined to deprive them of forage and provisions, so as to ruin the Persian army, or at least oblige them to retreat. With this intent, he ordered his troops to lay waste the country about Kandahar: his commands were so well executed, that the besiegers soon began to feel the inconvenience of want. Khosroff Khan being now vexed to the heart for having refused to sign the capitulation, was obstinately bent upon taking the town, and daily renewed his attacks; but the garrison defended themselves with such bravery, that the Persians tired out with such a long resistance and labouring under a want of all necessaries, soon deserted in whole troops. The Khan seeing his army at length reduced to 10,000 men, and not knowing any longer how to find subsistence even for these, resolved to retire. This resolution however was too late; for he had scarce begun to raise the siege, when Mir-Vais, who was marching with 16,000 horse to the relief of the place, fell upon his troops, who were so disheartened that they fled at the first onset. Their general strove to rally them, but fear had stifled every sense of subordination; insomuch that finding his efforts vain, and resolving not to survive the disgrace, he rushed at the head of the few remaining Georgians, into the midst of the thickest squadrons of the Afghans, where fighting with a desperate bravery, he was killed.

Such was the end of this prince, whom valour, military experience, and other virtues, rendered worthy of a better fate. He had been successively honoured with the posts of governor of Isfahan, and of Divan-Beghiⁿ, and by the death of his father was just raised to the dignity of Vali of Georgia, when the king named him generalissimo of his

^m One of the tribes of the Cligis already mentioned.

ⁿ Divan-Beghi, or lord of the council. He is lord chief justice.

armies. He, as well as Gurghin Khan his uncle, had the weakness to sacrifice his religion to his ambition; yet in his heart he was still a christian; and the missionaries were always sure to receive protection and assistance from him; he had even in that expedition two of those religious people with him, one of whom was killed close by him. It seems as if he intended to return to the religion of his ancestors, yet he affected outwardly to pass for a Mahomedan; from whence we may suspect the report of his carrying a cross in his standard.

This was the most considerable shock which the Persians had yet sustained in their war with the Afghans; for of their whole army, only 700 men escaped death or slavery: such was their distress for want of provisions and forage, during their retreat for several days, through rivers and defiles, whilst they were continually pursued by a numerous body of fresh cavalry.

The Persian court was greatly astonished at so
1713. important a loss, yet necessity seemed to dictate fresh efforts. Accordingly another army was raised, and the command given to Mahomed Rustan Khan, who marched against the rebels: but whatever valour and abilities that general might have, fortune did not favour him more than his predecessor. His troops were beaten and put to flight; and after this engagement, all the towns and strong holds, which had yet held out against the new government, submitted to them, and the whole kingdom of Kandahar acknowledged no other laws than those of the Afghans.

The Georgians, incensed at so many defeats,
1714. which they justly imputed to the cowardice and inexperience of the Persian troops; made an offer to the king of subduing the rebels, on condition that their army should be composed only of troops of their own nation; and that the necessary sums for defraying the charges of this expedition, should be paid at a certain time: but this weak prince Hussein, afraid of their making a bad use of their success, it is said, rejected their proposal. Be that as it may, the defeat of Mahomed Rustan Khan, was the last remarkable transaction during the reign of Mir-Vais. The court having lost all hopes of reducing him by open force, ceased to arm against him; so that this prince died peaceably in his new kingdom in 1715.

It may be said of this famous rebel, that he was as circumspect in engaging in any enterprize, as 1715. he was resolute in carrying it into execution; that his success was owing as much to his prudence as to his valour; and if he did not subvert the throne of his lawful sovereign, yet he gave the first blow to the Persian monarchy, and formed the people, by whom it was afterwards subverted. He had for some time assumed the title of king, and ordered that the Khotbah °, should be made in his name, and arrogated to himself the other ensigns of sovereignty. The inscription round his coin was a Persian distich, the sense of which is, " The celebrated Mir-Vais, emperor of the world, a most just prince, has caused this coin to be struck at Kandahar, the place of his residence."

° A prayer read by the Iman or priest of every mosque, every Friday in the afternoon, for the health of the king; and this is an essential mark of the acknowledgment of his sovereignty.

PART V.
 THE
 REVOLUTIONS of PERSIA,
 FROM THE
 DEATH of MIR-VAIS in 1715,
 TO THE
 Retreat of Prince VACHTANGA from the Frontiers
 of DAGISTAN in 1720.

CHAP. XXII.

Mir-Abdallah brother of Mir-Vais succeeds to the government of the Afghans. Mir-Maghmun, son of Mir-Vais, discovers a design of subjecting Kandahar, murders his uncle, and is chosen king of that country. The Abdolles dissatisfied. The adventure of Ezadallah, who defeats the Persian army, and makes himself master of Herat. Hostilities committed by the Kourds. Incursions of the Ousbegs. Character of the Lesgees, and their motives to invade Persia.

1715. **T**HE effeminacy and weakness of the Persian court seemed to devote the empire to ruin; so that instead of making a good use of the death of Mir-Vais, Shah Houssein was disposed rather to quit all pretensions to Kandahar, than to bear any longer the inquietude that must attend all attempts to reduce this province: the emotions which he seemed to feel on this occasion, arose only from the apprehension he was under that the divan would oblige him to make fresh preparations against the rebels.

In the mean time, the Afghans met to nominate a successor to Mir-Vais. This prince had left two sons; the rights

rights of nature and gratitude pleaded in favour of either one or other of them; but as their tender years rendered them incapable of holding the reins of a government hardly settled, Mir-Abdallah, whom Mir-Vais, his brother, had appointed his successor, was raised to the throne. This prince differed intirely from his predecessor: he had neither his genius, ambition, nor resolution: a timid circumspection, disguised under the name of prudence, constituted the principal part of his character. He soon convinced the Afghans that he was not born to supply the place of such a man as Mir-Vais; for he was scarce invested with the supreme authority, when he formed a resolution of restoring Kandahar to the crown of Persia. This scheme being communicated to the tribe, they were divided in their opinions. Those of a timorous and peaceable disposition, and such as through age and infirmities, had less resolution than caution, despaired of being able to hold out long against so formidable a power as Persia. They compared their forces with the great armies of this monarchy, and looking upon themselves as already subdued, judged of the severity of their punishment by the damage they had done to their enemies. Thus they longed for a reconciliation, which they considered as the only means of screening themselves from the resentment of their ancient masters.

On the other hand, the military-men, and such whose youthful blood moved brisker in their veins, exclaimed against the project, the execution of which they concluded would plunge the whole nation into the extremest calamities, as they could no longer depend on any treaties with the Persians; who would no sooner take possession of the strong holds of the kingdom, than without regarding the articles of peace, the observance of which themselves should not be able to enforce, would take signal vengeance for the infamy of so many defeats: "And what," said they, "should induce us to submit again to be shackled, after having so bravely recovered our liberty? What disgrace have we since suffered; or what advantages have the enemy had over us? Are we disheartened by our victories? Have we not the same arm and the same head? Or have we shaken off so odious a yoke, only to submit our necks to it again, at a time when our courage might secure our liberty? Let us rather boldly advance and attack our enemy on their own frontiers, since they no longer dare to carry on the war in our country: or if

" you

“ you are afraid of this attempt, tho’ the success is far
“ from being dubious, permit us at least to enjoy a tran-
“ quillity, which the terror of our arms has hindered them
“ so long from interrupting.” The last opinion was not
only the most noble, but likewise the most reasonable. In
the low state to which Persia was fallen, there was no just
grounds for hurrying the Afghans to a submission; and if
they must absolutely submit to a master, it would have
been more prudent to have chosen the Moghol, whose in-
terest it would have been to use them well; than a nation
whom they had so grievously offended.

Mir-Abdallah had however taken his resolution, and find-
ing it approved of by some of the chief men of the tribes,
he bent his thoughts upon putting it in execution. His in-
tention was to restore the city and the province to the
crown of Persia on three conditions: The first, that the
annual tribute which they paid before the revolt, should
be taken off; the second, that no foreign troops should be
sent into the province; and the third, that Hussein should
grant him the government of the kingdom, which should
be hereditary in his family. In consequence of this reso-
lution, they drew up the instructions of the deputies, whom
they intended to send to Isfahan; and as there was no rea-
son to doubt but their proposals would be extremely wel-
come, every thing seemed to secure an approaching peace,
when an accident happened which broke their measures.
Though they endeavoured to conceal this intended nego-
tiation, which they knew was disagreeable to the greatest
part of the tribes; it came to the knowledge of Mir-Magh-
mud, one of Mir-Vais’s sons. This prince, who was a-
bout eighteen years of age, being provoked to see himself
reduced to the condition of a subject, in a kingdom which
he looked upon as his patrimony, had hitherto dissembled
his resentment, from the expectation of a proper oppor-
tunity of shewing it. The aversion which the military
part of the nation had to this treaty, made him think that
the time was now come to gratify his revenge; with this
view he assembled about forty of his father’s friends, who
went with him to Mir-Abdallah’s palace, and made them-
selves masters of it. The young Maghmud, as a specimen
of that slaughter to which he afterwards familiarized him-
self, entered the apartment where his uncle was asleep,
and killed him. Immediately the forty conspirators pro-
claimed the new sultan with loud acclamations, and the
people alarmed at the sound of drums and other military
instruments,

instruments, with which the palace echoed, flocked thither to learn the cause of it.

Mir-Maghmun seeing the people assembled, made no scruple to acknowledge the parricide which he had just committed; but at the same time excused himself, by declaring his motive was the public good, as a proof of which, he read with a loud voice the instructions and other papers relating to the treaty which his uncle was on the point of concluding with the court of Persia. This treaty, as already mentioned, was odious to the greatest part of the nation, without whose knowledge it was entered upon: besides, Mir-Maghmun was son to the founder of their monarchy; and having been accustomed almost from his infancy to follow his father in all his expeditions, had on every occasion given signal proofs of his courage. These circumstances determined the people in his favour. The military men were the first who declared for him; and their suffrages having been confirmed by the rest of the tribes, he was with the general consent proclaimed king of Kandahar, six months after the death of Mir-Vais.

This young prince had scarce ascended the throne, when several events happened, which seemed to presage the troubles and desolation which his reign was to produce; at the same time they removed a part of those obstacles which stood in the way of his ambition. The family, to whom Abas the Great had given the government 1717. of Hagarai, being extinct, the kings his successors had subjected this province to the authority of a khan or governor, who, in their name, commanded in the province of Herat. The Abdolles, who, it has been already observed, submitted to Persia on condition of not being subject to foreign governors, were very impatient under their yoke, when the circumstances of the times determined them to follow the example of the Afghans of Kandahar. The Abdolles are a wandering nation, and like the Afghans divided into particular tribes. Mahommed Zammon Khan, then governor of the province, pleased with the agreeable countenance of Ezadallah, son to a chief of one of these tribes, demanded him of the father. Allured by the advantages which he expected, the parent used all his persuasion to engage his son to live with the Khan. The young man heard the proposal with indignation; so that the father determined to use his authority. This induced Ezadallah, in conjunction with some young men, to kill his

his father, and caused himself to be acknowledged chief of the tribe in his stead.

Mahommed Zamon Khan was soon informed of this action; and determined to punish the delinquent, not only as a parricide, but lest so bold a step should be followed by an insurrection. The Khan accordingly ordered five hundred horse to march against Ezadallah's party, who boldly met them, and routed the Persian troops. The governor shocked at this disgrace, thought seriously of preventing the ill consequences of it. He therefore assembled his troops at Herat, the capital of the province; and not chusing to trust the execution of an affair of this importance to any other person, he took the command of them himself, and marched towards the camp of the rebels. Ezadallah, now at the head of two thousand men, went to meet the Persians: he divided his troops into two bodies; one he ordered to lie in ambush, and with the other he waited for the enemy on the banks of the river Morga. At length the Persian army appeared; and the Khan seeing so small a number of the Abdoltees, confident of victory, charged the enemy without precaution; when the troops that lay in ambush sallied forth with loud shouts and cries, which surprized and terrified the Persians, insomuch that they turned their backs, and fled with the utmost precipitation to Herat.

The young Ezadallah, transported by his youth and courage, followed the enemy so close, that he entered with them pell-mell into the town. The inhabitants had formerly been of the sect of the Sunnis; several had still preserved their ancient religion; and there were some families descended from the ancient kings of the country. These circumstances, together with the lenity with which the inhabitants of Kandahar had been treated by Mir-Vais, and the tyrannical extortion of the Persian governors, induced the people to declare in favour of the Abdoltees; insomuch that having joined with them in putting the garrison to the sword, the city was soon delivered from the Persian yoke. This revolution happened in the year 1717. Ezadallah in less than three months got possession of the other strong places in the province, whose fidelity had been shaken by the example of the capital; and Herat became an independent republic, in which its deliverer held the most considerable rank.

This

This year, the Kourds, a restless roving people, situated west of Iracagemi ^P, appeared in arms at 1719. the gates of Hamadan, and wasted the country round that city. They carried their insolence so far, as to commit robberies under the walls of Isfahan, where they took away a number of horses belonging to the king.

These hostilities and the revolt of Herat, were not the only incidents that alarmed the court. The Ousbegs ^Q, a warlike tribe, whom their vicinity to Persia renders enemies to that crown, taking advantage of these circumstances, carried terror and desolation into the northern part of the vast province of Khorasan. At the same time, new troubles arose on the western shores of the Caspian Sea.

The province of Dagistan ^R, inhabited by the Lesgee Tartars, are Mahomedans ^S of the sect of Sunni. The ferocity of their natural disposition, joined to the sterility of their hills ^T, have induced them often to infest the neighbouring provinces. Abas II. upon his accession to the crown, came to an accommodation with them, and promised to pay annually, by way of subsidy, a certain sum to each tribe. Each of them promised to send every year an ambassador to the king, with a present of two calfskins, and two lambskins; as an acknowledgment of his sovereignty; and a peace was concluded on these conditions. As it was the interest of the Lesgees, they observed this treaty inviolate, as long as the subsidies agreed to were paid them; but the 1700 tomans ^U, appointed for that use, having for several years been applied to other purposes, by the avaricious ministers of Hussein, these people had recourse again to arms, and renewed their excursions.

^P This is part of the country of the ancient Parthians. Agem signifies barbarous or stranger, with regard to the Arabs.

^Q This name signifies free and independent. They are generally understood to be the Tartars of Khieva and Bokhara, and take in also those of Samarcand, which flourished in the time of Tamerlane. These people are comely, well-shaped, and active; much given to robbery, but make good soldiers. See G. Thompson's account of them, Vol. I.

^R Dagh, a mountain; Dagistan, a mountainous country. It is sometimes wrote Daghestan. I have given an account of these people in my 1st volume.

^S Formerly some of them were christians.

^T Their vallies however are fruitful.

^U 4,200 l.

C H A P. XXIII.

The court prepares to attack the Abdollees and Ousbegs. Seffie Kouli Khan is made general. Battle between the Persians and Abdollees. The Mascats take possession of Baharain. Lutf Ali Khan is chosen general, and marches towards the Persian gulf, and beats the rebels. Mir-Maghmun marches at the same time towards Khermani. The domestic enemies of the Persian general cabal against him. The Athemat-Doulet is confined, and his eyes plucked out. Lutf Ali Khan is carried prisoner to Isfahan, and the Persian army disbanded.

SHAH Hussein astonished to see so many provinces declare against him, at length roused from his lethargy. The Abdollees and Ousbegs having entered into a confederacy, appeared to be the most formidable of his enemies: he resolved therefore to make an extraordinary effort against them; and having deliberated some time on the choice of a general, he chose Seffie Kouli Khan. This nobleman had been invested some years with the post of Divan Beghi * of Isfahan; but upon discovering, that the king was so far prejudiced by his enemies, as to look upon the rectitude with which he discharged his office, as an excessive severity, he voluntarily resigned it, and withdrew from court.

Seffie Kouli Khan was now sensible of the difficulties he should encounter in so dangerous a commission, and of the oppositions he should find in the execution of his office, from the prevailing faction, by whom he was not beloved. These considerations engaged him to refuse so delicate, though at the same time so glorious an employment: but the court hit upon a very artful expedient to engage him to accept of it: this was to send to his only son, a horse richly caparisoned, a spear, a buckler, a cuirass covered with gold brocade, and a turban enriched with diamonds. Such presents are never made, except when the king intends to invest some person with an absolute authority, such as that of generalissimo. The father saw plainly the snare that was laid for him; but he who had presumed to refuse his sovereign, could not withstand the solicitations of a son whom he tenderly loved. This young nobleman, at the age of seventeen, was therefore declared generalissimo of the forces of the empire; and his father, as the court foresaw, determined to accompany him in the expedition.

* Lord chief-justice.

expedition. He accordingly assembled a considerable body of troops, and both of them repaired to Isfahan to receive the king's orders. The young general met with the most flattering marks of distinction: the king made a public entertainment for him, and girt his sword to his side, in presence of the whole court; and in order to give him an opportunity of shewing his dexterity, he ordered tilts and tournaments in the Meidan *, in which this young lord gained the applause of all the spectators.

After this kind of anticipated triumph, the general set out for the camp, in company with his father. His army consisted of 30,000 men, chosen troops; so that it was reasonable to expect success from such a body of forces, conducted, tho' under another's name, by so experienced a general as Seffie Kouli Khan. These expectations seemed to be confirmed by an event, which soon after ensued; for scarce had the Persians entered the province of Herat, when they fell in with a body of 12,000 Ousbegs, who were marching to the assistance of the Abdollees; and attacking them briskly, cut them in pieces.

This first enterprize raised the courage of the victors, but Ezadallah, more enraged than intimidated by this disgrace, thought only of recovering his loss by a new engagement, which was to decide the fate of the province of Herat. Ezadallah, at the head of only 15,000 horse, was not afraid to offer battle to an army which had double the number of men, and had likewise the advantage of a formidable train of artillery. During the course of this war, there was not a more obstinate engagement. The Persians and the Abdollees, equally animated, the one to avoid the shame of being vanquished, and the other by the desire of preserving their liberty, fought without intermission from sun rise; and at one in the afternoon, the victory was still undetermined, when the inattention of those who commanded the artillery, decided the fate of the day. These officers, not having observed that their own troops occupied a post which the Abdollees had just quitted, fired upon them; and the Persians, knowing that the enemy had no cannon, were surprized and thrown into confusion. The chiefs themselves apprehended treachery, and seemed irresolute in regard to what step they should take; when Ezadallah tried to avail himself of a circumstance, the cause of which was perhaps unknown to him. He therefore renewed the charge with fresh vigour, and meeting with only a faint resistance, from men who were uneasy and intimidat-

ed,

* The principal square in Isfahan.

ed, he pierced their squadrons, and obliged them to turn their backs.

Ezadallah spurred on by his hatred to the Persians, and his desire of enjoying all the advantages of his victory, pursued the enemy a whole day. The Persians lost in the action and flight 8000 men, among whom was their general, and his father Seffie Kouli Khan, who were killed in the retreat. Their baggage, the military chest, and 20 pieces of cannon fell also into the hands of the Abdollees; who on their part lost 3000 men; which to an infant republic, could be compensated only by the liberty obtained by that memorable engagement.

The Persian armies being thus unfortunate, new enemies declared against Hussein. The Mascats are a tribe of Arabians^y, whose country is the promontory towards the isle of Ormus, which forms the streights of the Persian gulf. These people are Mahommedans of a particular sect, yet more conformable to that of the Sunnis, than of the Schias^z: they are subject to an Imam^a, who has an absolute authority over them. This prince taking advantage of the melancholy state to which the kingdom of Persia was reduced, had already made himself master of the isle of Baharain^b; and, not content with this success, he threatened to take possession of Bender Abassi^c.

The court of Persia, unable to face all her enemies at once, seemed to have taken the resolution of arming only against those who declared last. They determined therefore to make preparations in order to oppose the designs of those Arabs; and as affairs were now reduced to an extremity by their late defeat at Herat, Fatey Ali Khan, at that time Athemat Doulet^d, offered to march thither in person; but the king fearing lest he should be rendered too powerful, by adding the authority of generalissimo to his present employment, returned him thanks, and appointed Lutf Ali Khan, brother in-law to that minister, to command the expedition.

In the beginning of the year 1720, this general
1720. marched a body of 20,000 men to the neighbourhood
of

^y The country over against Gombroon, on the northern coast of Arabia.

^z Persian sect.

^a An ecclesiastical sovereign.

^b Baharain signifies the two seas. An island famous for the Pearl fishery; it takes its name from a province of Arabia Felix, situated near it, between the Red Sea, and the Persian gulf.

^c This place was called Gombroon, before Abas I. had put it in the condition in which it is at present. To effect this, he made use of the materials of the city of Ormus, which he had lately demolished. Bender is of the same signification as Derbend, *viz.* port or fence of iron; Bender Abassi being properly the strong port of Abas.

^d Prime minister, as already explained.

of Bender Abassi; and as the Persians have no ships in that sea, he waited for the Portuguese fleet, which, pursuant to the treaty concluded with the viceroy of that nation, was to sail from Goa, in order to transport his troops to the isle of Baharain. This fleet, consisting of 4 large vessels, 15 pinks*, and some other transports, arrived soon after, and met with a kind reception from Lutf Ali Khan. But whether it was that he did not think this fleet strong enough to engage that of the Mascats, or whether his enemies at court had withheld the money designed for this use; he did not pay the sum that had been stipulated: the officer who commanded the fleet proposed to send for a reinforcement, if the Khan thought it proper; but finding this also ineffectual to obtain the payment, he prepared to sail back again to Goa. In the mean time the enemy apprehending lest the Portuguese fleet should be reinforced, resolved to attack them. Accordingly their vessels sailed from the port of Mascat, and soon appeared at the mouth of the streight; the Portuguese weighed anchor, and prepared to receive them; but having lost a small vessel in the engagement, which in other respects was not favourable to them, they retired in the night, and sailed directly for Goa. Lutf Ali Khan thus became desperate, as this accident disappointed all his projects; and he was reduced to the necessity of defending the coast against the insults of the Mascats, when a signal occasion happened of distinguishing his valour.

No sooner had Mir Maghmud deprived Mir Abdallah his uncle of his life and throne, than he seemed desirous of justifying so daring an action by some signal exploit. The Persians had made no attempt for a long time against Kandahar; and the incursions of the Lesgees, the Kourds, and the Oufbegs, together with the uneasiness occasioned by the taking of Baharain, and the revolt of Herat, left no room to apprehend the least danger from that quarter. And with regard to India, the domestic troubles of that empire secured him sufficiently against the enterprizes of the Moghol, as will appear from the following relation:

Mahommed Furrukhsir, the great Moghol, having advanced Seyd Abdallah Khan to the title of visier†, and his brother Hassan Ali Khan being the general pay-master‡ of the army; by their intrigues they acquired an unlimited au-

* Vessels of 1 or 200 tons, commonly known by this name.

† He had also that of Kotob Al Muluck, or axis of the empire, and Iar-ba-vafa the grateful friend.

‡ Mir Bukhsih.

thority, and at length seized on the person of their sovereign, and deprived him of his sight. In February 1719, they accomplished their work, and put him to an ignominious death, after a reign of seven years: they then chose Raffeeih al Dirjat, a prince of the imperial blood, who had been for some time confined in the castle of Selimgur, but this prince dying a natural death, a few days after these ministers proclaimed prince Sujambadour.

This new election was not attended like the former, with the unanimous consent of the people; for the inhabitants of Agra, then esteemed the capital of the empire, proclaimed Nafr O Din Mahommed Shah ^b, a grand-son of the famous Auring-Zebe; and both parties being obstinately bent to support the emperor whom they had chosen, this double election was soon followed by a civil war. After several battles, the grand visier apprehending that it would be a long time before the dispute could be determined by force of arms, resolved to bribe the principal inhabitants of Agra, who opened their gates to him, and delivered up Nafr O Din Mahommed Shah. But this event produced a very different effect from what might have been naturally expected; for a report being spread some days after, that prince Sajambadour had been put to death at Dehli, Nafr O Din Mahommed, who considered himself as a sacrifice to the security of his rival, was not only set at liberty, but acknowledged as emperor by both parties. And though the report was false as they were heartily tired of the war, both parties agreed to put Sajambadour to death.

It is very remarkable, that the grand visier and his brother acted with such cunning, as to preserve their whole authority during these troubles, though they soon became great objects of jealousy. By disbanding the armies, they had restored peace, but neither their own power, nor that of the emperor, were sufficiently fixed, to engage them in an enterprize, the issue of which had been always fatal to the Moghols.

As Mir Maghmud ¹ was free from any apprehension on this side, he employed his thoughts intirely about the execution of his favourite design. Mir Vais during his confinement

^b Nafr O Din signifies the supporter and assister of religion. This is the same prince whom the Persian usurper Nadir invaded 20 years afterwards. ¹ He is often called also Maghmud only; Mir has been already explained, chap. 16. and for this reason the hyphen between the words I discontinue as unnecessary.

ment at the court of Persia, had discovered so much of the weakness of the government, that it has been thought he then aspired not only at making himself master of the province of Kandahar, but likewise of subduing the whole monarchy. Be that as it may, Mir Maghmud now prepared for this great enterprize; but as his reputation was not yet sufficiently established, to venture to propose it to the Afghans, he resolved to engage in some expedition, by the success of which he might expect to gain their confidence. With this view, he assembled the chief men of the nation towards the year 1720, and having laid open his design to them, he caused a proclamation to be made, that whoever was willing to march with him against the enemy, should repair with his horse and armour to a certain place by him appointed. By this means he raised about 10,000 men, and putting himself at the head of them, he took the road to Kherman, while Lutf Ali Khan was advancing with his army towards Bender Abassi.

That part of Segistan, which separates the province of Kherman from the kingdom^k of Kandahar, is a country in which for fifteen days march there is nothing but sandy plains, with very few inhabitants. These difficulties did not deter Mir Maghmud; on the contrary he was desirous on this occasion to try the courage and resolution of his troops: besides, as he had laid a scheme to penetrate very soon by that road into the heart of Persia, it was a point of some importance to be acquainted with the nature of that country. He knew that water is scarce in those parts, and what little is found is hardly potable; this induced him to take the smaller number of horses and mules, and to mount his Afghans two or three on a camel, this animal being inured to thirst. As soon as he arrived on the frontier, he ordered these camels to be loaded with water, and in the same manner every soldier to fill the sheeps guts which they carried for this purpose like a girdle about their waists; and thus prepared, the army entered these deserts. He met no opposition during his march: the difficulties which he defied by taking this rout, constituted his security; but as the want of water, provisions, and forage, of which it was impossible to carry a sufficient quantity with them, together with the scorching heat of the sun, supplied in some measure the place of enemies, he lost two thousand men, and a considerable number of beasts of bur-

^k The reader must observe, that kingdom and province are sometimes used for the same country, not only according to the Oriental expression, but that by revolutions they are rendered independent sovereignties upon many occasions.

then. The Afghans, however, encouraged by the promises and example of their prince, bore with all these hardships, and at length passed the deserts. They had scarce appeared on the frontier of Kherman, when the khan of this province having no troops to oppose them, retired with his family. Mir Maghmud entered the country without fighting, and pursuing his march, came and refreshed his army in the very capital ^k of the province.

Tho' that city had opened her gates to Maghmud, yet he behaved as a conqueror: he laid heavy contributions, as well on the merchants, as the citizens, and put numbers of them to cruel tortures; suffering his troops to live at discretion: so that these miserable people experienced all the horrors and calamities of war, without having had the consolation of attempting to defend their lives and properties. They had been now four months subject to this tyrannical yoke, when Lutf Ali khan came and rescued them from oppression. This general, who was obliged to wait for enemies whom he could not go in search of, no sooner heard of what had passed in the province of Kherman, than he marched thither with a body of chosen troops. Fortune, which had been so favourable to the Afghans, now deserted them; for their little army was defeated and put to flight. The news of so important and unexpected a victory, being brought to Tæhiran, where the king was lately arrived, suspended the uneasiness of this prince, as well as of the whole court.

In the mean time, Lutf Ali khan perceiving that Kherman was the only place that could stop Maghmud, on the side of these deserts, fortified that part which is called the upper town, and serves as a citadel; after which he left a strong garrison in the place, and joined the main body of his army. Whether it was from a thirst of revenge of his enemies at court, who had considerable estates in those parts; or that he was obliged to have recourse to this expedient, in order to maintain his army; Lutf Ali khan laid heavy contributions on the country, taking all their arms, horses and camels; and dividing his forces into different bodies, he quartered

^k This city, which bears the same name as the province, is famous all over the east for the beauty of the shawls and stuffs manufactured there. The wool, of which they are made, comes chiefly from the neighbouring mountains: it is said that when their sheep browse on new grass, the whole fleece falls off, and leaves the sheep as if they had been shorn. Their wool is certainly allowed to be the finest and best we know of, and draws thither a number of Indian merchants.

quartered them upon the inhabitants at discretion. This continued till the autumn, when the army marched for Shirafs, the capital of Farfistan, which had been pitched upon as the general rendezvous. The troops assembled there in the month of November 1720, and a better appointed army had not been seen for many years in Persia. Their camp enjoyed great plenty; a vast quantity of provisions and ammunition having been amassed by means of several thousands of camels, which were employed for that purpose. The troops, encouraged also by the victory at Kherman, were impatient to be led against the enemy; and every thing seemed to preface the ruin of the Afghans, against whom all these preparations were making. But in spite of these favourable circumstances, Persia seemed devoted to ruin; for the general was arrested and sent a prisoner to court, and the whole army at once dispersed.

This sudden change was owing to those lords, whose lands had been lately ravaged by Lutf Ali Khan: incensed at the disregard which he had shewn them on this occasion, they figured to themselves how low their own interest would be reduced, if so great a piece of service, as the reduction of Kandahar, were added to the credit which the general had already acquired with the king, on account of his first victory. They resolved therefore to employ every engine of falsehood and malice, to prevent his marching upon that expedition; and despairing to succeed in their design, so long as Fatey Ali Khan continued in his office, this minister was the first victim whom they undertook to sacrifice to their own imaginary security.

The method which they took to attain their end, was as bold as it was wicked. The king's chief Mullah¹, and the Hakem Bachi^m, who were concerned in the plot, entered this prince's bed-chamber in the middle of the night, and imploring his pardon for so daring an intrusion, informed him of the imminent danger which he was in: they told him with all the appearance of the utmost consternation, that they had just discovered a confederacy formed against his majesty's crown and life: that Lutf Ali Khan was to enter Isfahan with his army, and to seize on the royal family; while the Athemat Douletⁿ, supported by a body of 3000 Kourds, who were on their march, under the command of a prince of that nation, was to secure his majesty's person: that there

¹ Either the Piche-Nahmaz, or great almoner; or the Khodafa, the chaplain. ^m The chief physician. ⁿ Prime minister.

was not a moment to lose, for this very night the conspirators intended to execute their execrable design. In proof of what they had advanced, they produced a letter, which they pretended had been written by the prime minister to the prince of the Kourds. This letter had the counterfeit of the royal seal upon it: Shah Hussein no sooner cast his eyes upon the seal, than imagining he knew it, he concluded he was undone, and his terror deprived him of his senses. While he was coming to himself, a council was called in a hurry, composed of some of the principal eunuchs, who were accomplices with the two accusers; and after a very short consultation, the king sent for the Kurchi Bachi^o, and commanded him to go with what number of soldiers he could get together, to break open the prime minister's house, and to bring him his head.

This order however was not strictly executed; for the eunuchs intending to oblige him to make a discovery of his effects, which they hoped would be confiscated in their favour, represented to the king that it was not proper to put him to death if he made no resistance; to which Shah Hussein acquiesced. The Athemat Doulet, who was asleep in his haram, made no scruple to obey: as soon as he was brought to the Kurchi Bachi, his eyes were plucked out, as if he had been convicted of high-treason; after which, under a pretext of extorting a confession of his accomplices, and the circumstances of the conspiracy, but in reality to force him to discover his effects, he was put to the torture.

No sooner was this wild resolution taken of arresting the Athemat Doulet, than messengers were dispatched on every side to secure the relations and friends of this unfortunate minister. The commission however seemed difficult to execute in regard to Lutf Ali Khan his brother-in-law; and it would have been so indeed, if this general had been guilty of the crime with which he was charged. The governor of Shirafs was ordered by the king to entice him into the town, and there to seize on his person, and send him under a proper guard to Isfahan. The governor found no difficulty in executing his commission; for Lutf Ali Khan, having no design but to march against the enemies of his country, suspected no evil. Such was the reward which this general received for his signal services. His disgrace was followed with the dispersion of the whole army; for the khans and other lords, who commanded the different bodies of which it

^o The general of the Kurchis, one of the troops of horse belonging to his majesty's household.

it was composed, apprehending from this example that they should be called to an account for the depredations committed in Khorman, retired to their own estates; inasmuch, that of this flourishing army, which promised security to Persia, in a few days nothing remained, except the artillery, ammunition, and provisions.

In the mean time every thing was in confusion at Tæhiran, where they were making preparations to defend themselves against the three thousand Kourds who were hourly expected; but as soon as it was day, and the king saw that no enemy appeared, and had also been informed by people arrived from different quarters, and by the several bodies of horse which were sent out as scouts, that every thing was perfectly quiet in the neighbourhood, this deluded prince began to suspect that they had imposed upon him. Under this suspense he sent for the Hakim Bachi, and with a very severe tone, which he seldom assumed, he bid him take care that the wounds they had made in the Athemat Doulet, by plucking out his eyes, did not endanger his life, for that he should answer for it. This declaration in all probability saved the life of that unfortunate man; whose barbarous enemies would probably have taken his life also, from an apprehension lest he should ruin them by detecting the villainous falsity of all their impostures.

The Athemat Doulet recovered; and the couriers, who had been sent, bringing intelligence that the army had made no motion, the Shah was confirmed in his suspicions, and resolved to examine the affair in a juridical manner.

C H A P. XXIV.

A divan is held, in which the king presides, to examine into the conduct of the Athemat Doulet. Articles of accusation brought against him; his answer and defence.

THE day being fixed for the trial of this great 1720. cause, the king determined to preside in person at the divan, which was composed of all the ministers and great officers of state. The prisoner being brought into the court, the session was opened with a recital of the several articles of complaint. The crimes laid to his charge were chiefly these, *viz.* “ I. That he had written and sealed “ with the royal seal, of which he was the depository in “ virtue of his office of prime minister, a letter by which he

“ desired one of the princes of the Kourds, to bring a body
 “ of 3000 men with him to Tæhيران, in order to seize on
 “ the person of the king. II. That he had maintained a
 “ correspondence with the Lesgees, from his attachment
 “ to the sect of the Sunnis which he professed; and that
 “ he had written a letter to one of their chiefs, which was
 “ also produced, and by which he gave him intelligence
 “ that they might continue their depredations with all
 “ security, provided they did not advance towards Erivan,
 “ where one of his nephews commanded. III. That he had
 “ said one day, when he was in the city of Koom, at the
 “ tomb of Shah Suliman, by whose orders his father had
 “ been put to death; that the time would come, when he
 “ would revenge his father’s death, by that of Shah Huf-
 “ sein, his son, and all the royal family.” But this last ac-
 cusation had no other proof to support it, than the deposi-
 tion of this minister’s valet de chambre.

Besides these three capital articles, several others were added, which seemed to be rather reproaches against his conduct, than subjects of accusation. It was laid to his charge, that he had decided all affairs of himself, and without the advice of the council, and the other ministers. That his orders were more respected in the provinces, than those of the king. That he had married his daughters and neices to the principal lords of the kingdom, from whence it was inferred that he intended to form a powerful party. That he had disposed of the government of provinces to his nephews, who were but children: and lastly, that as his estate by his own acknowledgment, amounted to the sum of nine hundred thousand tomans ^Ɔ, it was impossible he could have amassed such immense wealth, without extortion, or, at least, embezzlement of the royal revenues.

These were the articles of complaint against this minister: upon which the king having asked him whether he had any thing to say in his defence, he turned towards the place from whence he heard the voice, and addressed the king with an heroic firmness, but in a respectful tone. “ Great prince, the
 “ justification which you require of your slave, would be en-
 “ tirely useless, were it intended for no other purpose than
 “ to preserve his life, in the deplorable situation to which
 “ malice and imposture have reduced him: life is now be-
 “ come a load to him, undeserving of such care. But since
 “ his honour, and the glory which his family has acquired
 “ in the service of your august ancestors, do not permit him
 “ to

“ to be silent, while envy and malice are raising their batteries against him, he will convince your majesty, that if you had deigned to hear him before you had pronounced his sentence, it would have been as easy to confound the calumny of his accusers, as to ward off the fatal blow with which his innocence has been oppressed.”

After this tacit reproach, the Athemat Doulet ceasing to address himself in direct terms to the king, continued his discourse to this effect :

“ If the pretended conspiracy had not been the means projected, by which my enemies have ruined me, they would never have thought of so absurd, as well as heavy a charge against me. Does not this imposture refute itself ? When was it they intercepted this fatal letter, which has served as a foundation to this monstrous structure of iniquity ? Was it sent from Tæhيران ; and intercepted before it came to hand ? Or returned to them from the Kourds ? The Kourds were to make their appearance that night ; if the letter was intercepted, how was that possible, for these rebels had twelve days march to make ? the letter must consequently have been a long time in the hands of my accusers, which renders them accomplices of my supposed crime : therefore the chief to whom I wrote, must have sent it back : but if so, why should they have been afraid of those troops ? And if they contrived to take it from him upon his march, who is it that has hindered this prince from appearing before our gates ? Let my enemies explain themselves ; how is this important piece come hither : and why have they waited for the very moment in which the conspiracy was to take effect, before they shewed it to their majesties ?

“ The circumstances with which these informers corroborate their accusation, plainly shew their imposture. They say that I intended that very night with 3000 men to lay hands on the sacred person of my sovereign, surrounded by his courtiers, and by a guard of 15000 men ; and yet they found me asleep in my harram, with no other people about me than my own domestics. Lutf Ali Khan, who is supposed to have intended at the same time to take possession of the capital, we do not hear has made any motion at all with his troops ; and the prince of the Kourds, to whom I am said to have ordered the gates of the city to be opened that night, is sixty farsangs¹, distant from the frontier, and has not set his foot in the

“ province.

¹ A farsang is four English miles.

“ province. I shall not dwell any longer on the refutation
 “ of this part of the charge; their majesties have too much
 “ penetration not to see easily into the absurdity of it. I
 “ shall proceed to the other crimes of which I am accused.”
 “ It is true, I am a Sunni ^r, as my ancestors were; nor
 “ have I ever sacrificed my faith to the security of my for-
 “ tune; but I never kept it a secret from the king, nor from
 “ the rest of the nation; and their majesties, by entrusting
 “ me with the administration of affairs, plainly shewed that
 “ this difference of persuasion was no just reason for doubting
 “ of my allegiance. But they have produced a letter, which
 “ they pretend I wrote to a chief of the Lesgees, encouraging
 “ those people to continue their depredations. Is it not e-
 “ vident that this is an artifice like the former? Is there any
 “ great difficulty in counterfeiting a bul ^s in a country,
 “ where the most experienced Saraf ^t can hardly discern a
 “ piece of spurious coin from that which has passed through
 “ the royal mint. These dumb testimonies determine no-
 “ thing, if they are not supported by other proofs: and
 “ what other proofs have they to alledge against me? Eve-
 “ ry one knows, that the king having enjoined me by a spe-
 “ cial commission to suppress the insolence of those mountai-
 “ neers, I charged my nephew with this expedition. Now
 “ this young man, whom I loved as my son, and had pub-
 “ licly adopted as my heir, was slain by those very Lesgees,
 “ with whom they pretend I held a criminal correspon-
 “ dence: and surely his unhappy catastrophe is a full justi-
 “ fication of my conduct in this particular. The depreda-
 “ tions of those people ought not to be laid to my charge,
 “ but to those who were the cause of them, by converting
 “ to their own use for several successive years, the subsidies
 “ granted by treaty to the Lesgees.
 “ With respect to the execrable menaces which they ac-
 “ cuse me of having uttered at Koom, surely it would be a
 “ matter of amazement to all the world, if in so numerous
 “ a family as that of an Athemat Doulet, there was not one
 “ domestic to be found whom money could corrupt. But
 “ tho’ this testimony is not sufficient, according to law;
 “ yet there is the highest reason, since the sacred person of
 “ the prince is concerned, that no means should be neglect-
 ed

^r Sect of the Turks. ^s The bul generally contains the
 name of the person, oftentimes with the addition of a moral sen-
 tence, engraved on a seal, which they use with ink, as described in
 Vol. I. Chap 47. in the manner as Europeans subscribe their
 names. ^t A money changer.

“ ed that can confirm or invalidate his allegation. Let this
“ wretch be therefore put to the rack, and he will declare the
“ persons by whom he has been corrupted ; by which means
“ perhaps a complete discovery will be made of the iniqui-
“ tous designs of my enemies. This,” continued the mi-
“ nister, “ is what I have to answer to the former parts of my
“ charge ; and it will be as easy to justify myself in the latter.

“ During my whole administration, I never determined
“ upon any affair of moment without the king’s express di-
“ rections : for the truth of this I appeal to their majesties,
“ who know it best. As to the ordinary business of my mi-
“ nistry, I always consulted certain persons who now make
“ this complaint, till I found them disaffected to my person,
“ and too much attached to their own private interest, to
“ give me any counsel capable of promoting the public good.
“ If those very persons, who now seem so tender of the re-
“ spect due to the supreme authority, had not often caused the
“ orders sent into the provinces, even in the king’s name,
“ to be revoked, they would not have the boldness to ac-
“ cuse me of a fault of which they are conscious of being
“ guilty themselves. For my own part, I observed a quite
“ different conduct, by making it a rule never to retract,
“ either through interest or sollicitation, whatever I had once
“ determined, after a thorough knowledge of the matter.

“ I could not have expected, I own, that I should be ac-
“ cused of having settled my daughters and nieces in a man-
“ ner suitable to my dignity and their birth. Do my ene-
“ mies imagine, that a minister so greatly favoured by his
“ master, should forget himself to that degree, as to seek
“ husbands for his daughters from among the dregs of the
“ people ; or dishonour the blood of the ancient kings of Da-
“ ghستان, from which he has the honour of being descend-
“ ed ? Would they have me court the protection of eunuchs,
“ and ally my family with their creatures and domestics ?
“ But not satisfied with reproaching me for the advantageous
“ settlement of my daughters ; they require me to make an
“ excuse for the king’s indulgence, in granting the govern-
“ ment of some provinces to two of my nephews. It is true,
“ I solicited that favour, but not without a precedent ; since
“ their majesties had granted it to others who were never
“ censured for it. Thus, great prince,” continued he,
“ the fury of my enemies has transported them so far, that
“ they are not afraid of challenging me for your goodness.
“ They demand of me an account of my effects, and for-
“ getting that I hold the greatest part of what I possess from
“ the

“ the royal bounty; can they pretend to be ignorant that I
 “ was born to a great estate, that I inherit my brother’s for-
 “ tunes, and that the good œconomy with which I have al-
 “ ways lived, has increased my property. I intended to
 “ leave all to my nephews, and my daughters; and so na-
 “ tural a consideration might have justified my parsimony:
 “ but what pretext have my enemies for their insatiable a-
 “ varice! have they any such relations, or are they capable
 “ of heirs? What use would they make of their riches,
 “ unless they would send every year to Mecca and Medina
 “ camels loaded with wealth, and violate with impunity the
 “ the laws of the kingdom, by which such pilgrimages are
 “ expressly forbidden?”

The Athemat Doulet having finished his vindication; his
 accusers alledged against him further, that the expedition of
 Baharain had miscarried by his collusion with the officers of
 the Portuguese fleet; that in conjunction with Lutf Ali
 Khan, he had betrayed the interests of the state, by not
 making a proper use of the consternation of the rebels after
 the victory of Kherman by laying siege to Kandahar; charg-
 ing him with all the violences committed upon the sea coast
 towards the end of the campaign, and insisting on his de-
 claring the motives that engaged his brother-in-law to march
 towards Shirafs, instead of leading his army, as the court
 intended against the Afghans.

“ I might very easily,” replied the minister, “ avoid en-
 “ tering into any discussion upon this subject; for it would
 “ be sufficient for me to alledge, that since no man is an-
 “ swerable for more than his own actions, I cannot, without
 “ manifest injustice, be charged with any faults committed
 “ by my brother: but the conduct of this general has been
 “ so prudent and so agreeable to the real interests of the
 “ state, that I am not afraid to be answerable for his milita-
 “ ry operations. All the world knows, that the great Shah
 “ Abas having dispossessed the Portuguese of the isle of Or-
 “ mus, by the assistance of the English fleet^w; this prince,
 “ in order to preserve his conquest, without being obliged
 “ to maintain a number of ships, concluded a peace with
 “ them, and consented to let them have the moiety of the
 “ duties collected in the island, which was afterwards valued
 “ at a certain sum. It is also well known, that the funds
 “ appropriated

^w Here he alludes to the eunuchs. ^w Alphonso de Albu-
 querque conquered the isle and city of Ormus in 1507; it was
 taken again by the Persians in 1622, when the English had a
 grant of duties at Bender Abassi the new town.

“ appropriated to this use have been for many years applied
“ to other purposes : the embassador whom their majesties
“ appoint to reside at Goa, could not therefore engage the
“ viceroy to send his fleet into that sea, without promising
“ to pay part of the arrears. But Lutf Ali Khan not being
“ able to perform such agreement, for want of the money,
“ which was never remitted to him, as we can easily prove,
“ the Portuguese commander, incensed at this breach of
“ promise, not only refused to take our troops on board,
“ but put back to sea. This is the plain matter of fact, the
“ truth of which will be attested, if necessary, by the com-
“ missary of this very fleet, who is now at Isfahan.

“ But Lutf Ali Khan, they pretend, ought to have made
“ a proper use of his victory, by forcing the rebels in
“ their own capital *. Is it possible that such arguments as
“ these should come from persons who concern themselves
“ in the administration of public affairs? Is it not well
“ known, that this general had only a detachment of his
“ army with him? Would it have been right in him, with-
“ out ammunition or provisions, to undertake, just after the
“ harvest, the siege of a place extremely well fortified, and
“ defended by an army double the number of his own? He
“ was too prudent to take so rash a step, but contented him-
“ self for that time, with putting the city of Kherman in a
“ posture of defence; and I am not afraid to own, that it
“ was by my advice he afterwards joined the main body of
“ his army. Having afterwards determined to carry the
“ war into the province of Kandahar, he set about making
“ the necessary preparations for this great expedition. He
“ was then obliged to make the province † furnish the mo-
“ ney and provisions for the subsistence of his troops; and
“ if in the execution of those orders, there was a mixture
“ of prejudice or resentment, this is a fault that ought not
“ to be ranked amongst crimes committed against the state.

“ Such was the real cause of those irregularities which
“ have been so greatly exaggerated. In regard to the mo-
“ tives which determined Lutf Ali Khan to advance towards
“ Shirafs, it is easy to account for them. This general,
“ grown wise by the fatal example of Khosroff Khan, had
“ determined to surprize the rebels, lest they should destroy
“ the crop, which is gathered in that country two moons
“ before the vernal equinox. He could not therefore take
“ a better measure, than to advance towards this city; be-
“ cause here he was in a situation to traverse the deserts by
“ the

* Kandahar.

† Khermania.

“ the shortest way: besides, he considered that it was much
 “ easier to form magazines in the center of a fruitful pro-
 “ vince, and at no great distance from the capital, than on
 “ a barren coast. It is notorious, that he spared neither
 “ money solicitations, nor care, to gather in those provi-
 “ sions; and that I even sent, at my own expence 3000
 “ camels loaded with rice. If we had any design, as our e-
 “ nemies pretend, to march the army against Isfahan, the
 “ carrying away such a prodigious quantity of provisions
 “ was an unpopular measure, and tended to incense the peo-
 “ ple against us; for they were already irritated by the bur-
 “ thens laid on them. But it is needless to spend any more
 “ time in justifying a conduct, the rectitude and prudence
 “ of which are evident: it is now time that their happy
 “ majesties, who are the shadow of God upon earth, should
 “ determine the cause between innocence and imposture.”

C H A P. XXV.

Death and character of the Athemat Doulet. Excursions of the Lesgees. Magnanimity of Vachtanga; he puts on the turban, and is named Vali of Georgia. Preparations made by this prince against the Lesgees, whom he reduces to extremity. They are saved from destruction by a court intrigue. Vachtanga takes an oath never to appear in arms in defence of Persia.

FATEY Ali Khan having thus finished his apology, the king, far from being offended with the liberty with which he had delivered himself, could not help weeping at the misfortunes occasioned by his precipitate judgment. And yet as this disgrace was irreparable, and the court imagined they could no longer put any confidence in a man whom they had used so barbarously; after he had been a victim to malice and credulity, he fell a sacrifice to policy, and was sent a prisoner to the castle of Shirafs: but Shah Hussein to soften in some measure the rigour of this sentence, granted him a considerable pension, and endeavoured to comfort him by representing the inevitable necessity of fate². The Athemat Doulet died in prison a little after the taking of Isfahan¹. It was imagined that he made use of poison

² Predestinarianism is a fundamental principle of the Mahomedan religion. ¹ By the Afghans near two years afterwards.

poison, fearing lest Mir Maghmud should oblige him to make discoveries prejudicial to the state: but it is more probable that he fell under the weight of his own misfortunes, and those under which his country was now involved, by the evil government of his enemies.

Shah Hussein thus lost the wisest of his ministers. He had the noblest mien of any person at court; and as he mentioned in his justification, owed to his œconomy and good management, that great fortune of which he was possessed. As to the conspiracy, it was undoubtedly a contrivance of his enemies: but tho' his integrity was untainted in this particular, his reputation was not without blemish. It is beyond dispute, that after Mir-Vais was sent prisoner to Isfahan, Fatey Ali Khan took him under his protection, and sent him back to Kandahar. Now, whether he was moved by compassion for that prince, who was a Sunni as well as himself; or whether he acted from an aversion to Gurghin Khan; or lastly, through the temptation of the great presents he received from the prisoner; it was certainly a dangerous step, and sufficient to render his fidelity suspected. Besides, he was already appointed Athemat Doulet, or of the same party as the person who then occupied that post, when Khosroff Khan marched against the Afghans; and this cabal was charged with being the cause of the death of that prince, and of the total defeat of the army.

But these are not the only crimes with which some writers have stained the memory of this minister. A missionary, who was at Shamakie at the taking of that city, asserts, that Fatey Ali Khan, provoked at not having been able to obtain of Shah Hussein the abolition of the Carack^b, imposed on the Sunnis, and the custom of uttering maledictions against the three first caliphs, with which the Persians always end their public prayers, formed a project to subvert the government of the Schias, and to ascend the throne himself. Filled with this idea, he saw no nation on whom he could depend so well as on the Lefgees, because he was descended from their ancient kings, and moreover most of their tribes are of this sect. Hence he engaged them to take up arms, and to make incursions into the province of Shirvan; not questioning but as a considerable number of the inhabitants professed this same religion, the province would shake off the yoke, and join their forces to those of the rebels.

Be

^b A poll-tax paid in Mahomedan countries by subjects who are of a different religion from that of the prince.

Be that as it may, Shah Hussein remained so strongly persuaded of the innocence of this minister, that though he had the great weakness to pardon his accusers, yet the conduct he observed towards those who had been confined upon this account, sufficiently evinces that he did not believe him guilty. All of them, without exception, had their estates restored to them; and if some who were possessed of governments had them taken from them, and others were detained at Isfahan, this was only through fear, lest they should be induced by their resentments to justify the suspicions conceived of them. It is even observed, that though the Athemat Doulet's estate was confiscated; yet the several portions were excepted, which belonged to his sons-in-law, Mahommed Kouli Khan, the prince of Kaket^c, and to the Kouliar Agaffi^d, brother of the Vali of Georgia, as their wives portion. True it is, that as the fidelity of these lords was well known, they were not included in the number of those whom the court was to have an eye over; and Lutf Ali Khan, who had been considered as one of the chiefs of the pretended conspiracy, and as such had been removed to Tæhiran, underwent no other punishment than that of restoring to the king the plunder he had taken upon the frontier, and of being watched at Isfahan, not as a state-criminal, but as a man who had just cause to be disaffected to the government.

This storm was at length succeeded by some days of calm. The Lesgees, whose incursions had given great uneasiness to the court, sent deputies to Isfahan to sue for a reconciliation. The anxiety with which this revolt had filled the minds of Shah Hussein and his ministers, was well founded; for those people having driven away the collectors and other officers belonging to the king, assembled towards the beginning of 1719 to the number of two thousand men; and, commanded by Mullah Abdallah, and Kanlu Saban, their chiefs, they made incursions, and spread terror and desolation in some of the neighbouring parts of Georgia. Their reputation and forces having increased by their success, they were joined by a body of near 30,000 of the inhabitants

^a Kaket, a province, the government of which is sometimes joined to that of Karabagh, and sometimes to that of Georgia. It has also had its general governors; from whence they have derived the name of prince. ^b The chief of the slaves, a body of cavalry, composed of men of distinction, who stile themselves the king's slaves,

habitants of Shirvan, who were of the sect of the Sunnis, and pushed their hostilities to the gates of Ganja and Shamakie. At length the khan, who commanded in the latter, having received orders to oppose these hostilities, marched at the head of forty thousand men against the rebels, who were then incamped in a plain between Ganja and the borders of Shirvan. But just when he was preparing to attack them, they surprized him in the night, so that part of his army was cut to pieces, and the remainder dispersed. The khan * himself perished on this occasion, with most of his principal officers.

The fear of the resentment of a power over whom they had obtained so signal a triumph, was not the motive which induced these people to sue for peace. They were determined to take this step by a more pressing consideration; which I shall explain by tracing matters somewhat higher.

After Khosroff Khan was slain before Kandahar, Vachtanga, as the eldest of the family, ought in course to have succeeded him in the dignity of Vali of Georgia; but as he refused to wear the turban †, his younger brother, though the patriarch of that country, offered himself in his stead. Their father, then Divan Beghi of Isfahan, tho' a Mahommedan himself, was so incensed at this scandalous proposal, that he ordered this irreligious priest to be bastinadoed, and kept to his sacerdotal function. The investiture of this principality was then given to the third son, who being less scrupulous than the eldest, and somewhat less culpable than the second, embraced the Mahommedan religion.

Vachtanga, though banished to Kherman, persevered in his glorious resolution many years; but at length the solicitations of the court, joined to the irksomeness of his exile, overcame his constancy: he renounced, or more probably pretended that he renounced, christianity, and in consequence thereof was named Vali of Georgia. This new prince repaired to Teflis in 1719: he was scarce arrived there, when beholding with sorrow and indignation, the devastations

* This being the first battle of any consequence that was fought between the Persians and Lefgees in Hussein's reign, renders it probable, that this khan was the nephew of Fatey Ali Khan mentioned in his vindication, page 175. † This is sometimes used as an expression to denote the Mahommedan religion; tho' the Armenians, who are christians, wear turbans in Persia.

which the Lesgees had committed in his territories, he determined to revenge the cause of his people in such a manner, as should secure them for ages against their dangerous neighbours. Having obtained the consent of the nobility, who were convened upon this account, he ordered every Georgian that was able to bear arms, to join him in that capital; he also made every other preparation that was necessary, and the ensuing spring would have been ready to take the field at the head of 60,000 men.

The Lesgees saw into his design, and concluded they were undone: their only resource was to implore the clemency of Shah Hussein, and to persuade this prince to interpose his authority in their favour. Such was the motive of the deputation they now sent: but the Georgians were in arms, when the king's first Mullah, and the physician^a, invoked their infernal genius to conjure up another storm. These treacherous courtiers, reflecting that a son-in-law of the Athemat Doulet, who lately fell a sacrifice to their impostures, was brother to this prince; were afraid lest after having defeated the Lesgees, he might attempt to make use of so fine an army, to oblige the court to punish them for their iniquitous conduct. They availed themselves therefore of the ascendant they had gained over their weak and deluded sovereign, and represented that Vachtanga, after defeating his enemies, might occasion great troubles in Persia, especially as it would then be very easy for him to receive considerable succours from Russia by sea: therefore the only way to prevent these misfortunes, would be to grant a peace to the Lesgees, and order the Vali to cease all hostilities, which would oblige this prince to disband his troops, and remove all apprehension of danger from his ambition; moreover, that this measure would prevent the depopulation of a province, which the vicinity of the sea rendered very considerable, without exposing Persia to any future invasions from those people; for the dread of being delivered up to the resentment of the Georgians, would necessarily contain them within the bounds of their duty.

Shah Hussein, persuaded by this artful discourse, made no difficulty to grant a peace to the rebels. And without keeping any measures with the Vali of Georgia, he forbid him in the most imperious and haughty manner to give them any further disturbance. His orders were: "If you have got your foot in the stirrup, alight immediately. If you have drawn your sabre, put it directly into the scabbard; and

^a Hakem Bafhi.

“ and if you are in pursuit of the Lesgees, stop the moment
 “ you receive our commands; in a word, take the utmost
 “ care not to infringe the peace which they have obtained
 “ from the clemency of him whom the universe obeys.”

Vachtanga was already in full march, and upon the point of crushing his enemies, when he received these strict and unwelcome orders. It is generally believed that the only motive which induced him to stop his pursuit, and obey the imprudent orders of the Persian court, arose from an apprehension lest the chiefs of the nation should desert him, as they had formerly deserted Gurghin-khan. Be that as it may, he declared he would obey, but it was in terms that clearly demonstrated the height of his resentment. After ordering the courier into his presence, he drew his sabre, and swore he would never fight again in the service of the king, nor in the defence of Persia. He then disbanded his troops, and withdrew to Teflis, fully determined to observe his oath inviolate.



PART VI.
THE
REVOLUTIONS of PERSIA,
FROM THE
COMMENCEMENT of the YEAR 1721,
TO THE
BATTLE of GULNABAD in 1722.

CHAP. XXVI.

Pacific dispositions of the Afghans. Uneasiness given to the court of Isfahan by the arrival of the Turkish ambassador. Hussein sends an ambassador to the grand signior; and frightened by various presages, returns to Isfahan. The Lesgees lay siege to Shamakie, take it, and commit great cruelties; they make themselves masters of the rest of Shirvan, beat the Khan of Erivan, and lay siege to Ganja. The court in great consternation.

1721. **A**T the commencement of this year, things seemed to promise tranquillity. The ready submission of the Vali of Georgia, and the pacification of Dagistan, put an end to the anxiety which had been created by the formidable army of that prince, and by the excursions of the Lesgees. Advice was also come, that the rebels of Kandahar, intimidated by their defeat, were ready to enter into an accommodation: and the peace and restitution of the isle of Baharain, which were negotiated by the king's orders, and actually concluded in the course of this year, by means of eight thousand romans¹, gave room to hope, that the monarchy thus delivered from its principal enemies, might subdue the rest, whom fear and example would hereafter contain within proper bounds.

But there was one circumstance which still disturbed the court. They had heard by letters from Hassan Basha, the governor

¹ 20,000 l.

governor of Bagdat, that an ambassador from the Ottoman port was ready to set out for Tæhيران: and as it was well known that the grand visier ^k, Ali Bacha^l, designed to declare war against Persia, when he was killed at the battle of Peterwaradin^m; they had reason to apprehend, lest his successor should inspire the grand signior with the same sentiments, especially at a time when the peace of Passarowitz, and the intestine commotions of that kingdom, afforded a favourable opportunity for such an undertaking.

Under these circumstances, the timorous court of Hussein concluded that this minister was come to demand the cession of some province, and to declare war in case of a refusal. And tho' the king had already resolved to send an ambassador to Constantinople, in order to sound the disposition of the port; and, if there should be occasion, to purchase the continuation of the peace, by offering to yield some extent of territory towards Erivan or Kerkoud; yet the uncertainty he was under, whether the Turks would be contented with these terms, occasioned great uneasiness.

As the king could not avoid giving audience to this minister, the governors of the places through which he was to pass, had orders to receive him with all the honours and respect due to his character. He came by Kermansha, Hamadan, Derghesin, and Casbin to Tæhيران, where he arrived towards the beginning of January 1721, two months after his departure from the frontier, and the disgrace of the Athemat Doulet.

The ambassador, whose name was Dourj Effendiⁿ, has given the following relation himself of the ceremony of his being admitted to audience. "In this order I went to the palace of Tcharbag, where having alighted from my horse at the third gate, I entered the audience chamber. The Shah was seated opposite the door: at his right and left were a great number of officers^o: there were also thirty Persians^p magnificently armed, and about ten ministers

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^k Vazir or visier, in the Arabian tongue signifies a porter. In Turkey this title is given to the counsellors of state; and that of vizir-azem, or grand visier, is first minister. ^m This minister was remarkable for his integrity; but he was severe, and hated the christians, whom he considered as the natural enemies of his master. ⁿ A strong town of Sclavonia on the Danube, subject to the house of Austria. ^o Signifies skill'd in law. ^p Beglerbegs and khans. ^q Of those who are called Kuzzlebashi, which signifies red heads; so called from the crimson caps worn when

“ ministers or great officers of the kingdom; the latter
 “ were seated. I passed through the midst of them with a
 “ stately gait; I wore a stiff turbant on my head, a gown
 “ lined with sable on my shoulders, and held the imperial
 “ letter as high as my head. I walked on very gently till
 “ I came near the sofa, on which the Shah was seated;
 “ and when I was within two steps of him, I raised the
 “ imperial letter with my right hand; and with my left,
 “ I saluted him in the manner sovereigns are saluted,¹
 “ and I spoke to him thus:

“ May health reside with thee²: God preserve me from
 “ the Scheithan³ Alragim. In the name of the most mer-
 “ ciful God, this present writing tells thee the truth⁴.
 “ Behold the most happy and most magnificent imperial
 “ letter of their majesties, the most magnificent, the most
 “ formidable, the most majestic, the most potent Sultan
 “ Achmed, Khan Gazi⁵; may God give glory to those
 “ who assist him; sovereign of the two continents, em-
 “ peror of the two seas⁶; who is a second Alexander Zul
 “ Karnein⁷; servant of the holy oriental cities⁸; sultan,
 “ son of sultan. He wishes all health to the most fortu-
 “ nate presence of their majesties, the Shah Gemja⁹,
 “ whose crown glitters like the sun, and desires to be in-
 “ formed of his precious health.

“ I made him this compliment in the tone in which we
 sing

when they were first formed into a body under this name, by
 Scheich Heydr, father of Ismael I. of the Seffie dynasty. They
 have been sometimes considered as the janissaries, *i. e.* Ingecher-
 ris among the Turks, though this distinction is in a great mea-
 sure lost, for the soldiers in general wear crimson caps; but the
 corps of every different nation are kept distinct. I presume
 he took the hem of his garment and kissed it.

The Turks generally begin all their recitals and writings with an invocation.

² Scheithan or Sathan, with us satan; whom the Mahomedans believe to have been cursed for having resisted the will of God, when he was commanded to prostrate himself before Adam. Ragim, according to some commentators, signifies deprived of grace.

³ A passage of the khoran. ⁴ This surname is given to those Mahomedan princes, who have made conquests over the enemies of their religion.

⁵ The Black Sea, and the Archipelago.

⁶ With two horns, that is, whose empire embraces the east and west, named by the eastern people the horns of the world.

⁷ Mecca and Medina. ⁸ As great and as potent as Gem or Giamschid, an antient king of Persia.

“sing the Ezan^a, throwing my words into a cadence:
 “The prime minister^b, who was during this time on my
 “right hand^c, attempted twice to take the imperial letter
 “from me; but I took no notice of him. The Shah him-
 “self stretched out his hand with the same intent; but
 “your slave^d cast his eyes on no sort of object till he
 “had finished his harangue. Then I kissed the imperial
 “letter; and raising it twice to my head, I presented it
 “to the Shah, who had already thrice offered to take it.
 “He raised himself on his knees to receive it; and hav-
 “ing kissed it, he made a sign to the chief of his eunuchs^e,
 “who came for it, kissed it, raised it twice to his head,
 “and then held it in his hands. The Shah ordered me
 “at the same time to sit down; but your slave, out of re-
 “spect refused it. He commanded me a second time;
 “and as I continued to refuse it, the chief master of the
 “ceremonies^f took me hold by the arms, and forced me
 “to sit down^g.”

The king asked the ambassador many questions; and after they had dined in the same hall according to custom, he took his leave of the king, and retired. The 10th of March^h Shah Hussein gave audience for the third and last time to this ambassador: on which occasion a minister from Russia, two envoys from the Ousbegs, and ninety-four deputies of the Lesgees were introduced. The latter were come to demand, each in the name of his particular tribe, the ordinary subsidies, the payment of which had been settled by the late peace. The king being pre-possessed with an opinion that the Turks intended to take an advantage of the divisions which had rent the kingdom, was agreeably surprized when the ambassador of the port assured him, that his master was fully determined to observe the peace. The beginning of April the Turkish ambassador set out on

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^a The Ezan is what they cry five times with a loud voice from their turrets, to give the people notice that it is the hour of prayer.

^b Athemat Doulet. ^c Giamschid, the antient king of Persia just mentioned, gave the preference to the left; though in general the right is esteemed in the east, as with us in Europe. ^d This description was given to the grand signior. ^e The Kassar Aga

^f The Elik Agah Bassi, chief master of the ceremonies, whose office it is to hold the ambassadors by the arm, while they pay their respects to the king. ^g From this extract we may form

an idea of the formal manner of a Turkish writer, as well as of the ceremonies of a Turkish ambassador at a Persian court.

^h Vernal equinox, or Persian new-years-day.

his return for Constantinople. Mortaza Kouli Khan, appointed ambassador to that court, was also preparing to take the same rout, with a more explicit answer than that which the king had given to the Turkish minister.

In the interim, the court received fresh alarms from the eastern part of the empire: the governor of Mesched acquainted the court by a letter, that the Abdollées of Herat had made great incursions; observing, that if speedy measures were not taken to protect the city and its dependencies against the rebels, they must soon be obliged to submit. This intelligence was soon followed by news of a more dreadful nature: the 26th of the same month, Tavrís, the second city of the kingdom, and capital of the province of Aderbeitzan, was destroyed by an earthquake, in which very near a hundred thousand of the inhabitants perished.

Under these melancholy circumstances, Shah Husein prepared to take his leave of Tæhiran, and return to Isfahan, where he arrived with his whole court the first of June. Towards the end of this month, the consternation of the people was increased by a phænomenon, which might be considered as such in that climate. They were ten days without seeing the sun; during that time it is said the horizon was covered with a reddish cloud, with but little more light than when the sun is totally eclipsed. The astrologers pretended that all these signs presaged great calamities to Isfahan; and the king having questioned them concerning the nature of these calamities, some of them predicted an earthquake like to that which had lately destroyed the city of Tavrís; others, that fire would fall from heaven and cause a general conflagration; but not one of them had sense enough to see, or not honesty and courage enough to tell this monarch, that his effeminacy and weakness had rendered him contemptible; and that his own subjects, no longer restrained by fear, would be themselves the cause of all the misfortunes with which he was menaced. The king, as a further mark of his imbecillity, frightened at these predictions, quitted his palace, and went to lodge in tents: part of the court and of the inhabitants having followed the example of the prince, the gardens and public squares were filled with people.

Things

* Capital of Khorasan. The same fate happened in 1657.

† This circumstance, tho' seriously attested, the reader is at his liberty to believe: when mens minds are disordered with fear, they easily imagine they see spectres.

Things were in this situation, when a new disgrace seemed already in some degree to verify the prediction. The Lesgees, restless and unmindful of their great obligations to Hussein, remembered only the oath of Yachtanga the Vali of Georgia; and being informed moreover that from a strong persuasion of their not daring to break a peace, which had been granted as so high a favour, the neighbouring provinces were bare of troops, they were emboldened by these circumstances, joined to that of Shah Hussein's removal to Tæhيران, to make an irruption into Shirvan, under the command of Sultan Ibrahim, and Daoud Beg their chiefs.

The pretext with which they covered this revolt, was the disgrace of Fatey Ali Khan, who had been condemned, they said, only because he was descended from their antient sovereigns. They soon made themselves masters of the flat country: but their aim was above destroying defenceless peasants, and plundering villages. The riches of Shamakie, the capital of the province, equally excited the ambition and the avarice of their generals; and tho' their army, which consisted only of 15,000 men, did not seem strong enough for the execution of such a project, yet they appeared the 15th of August before that city, in hopes that they should be favoured in their enterprize by the Sunnis, who were the most numerous part of the inhabitants. This conjecture was justified by the event. The governor, Hussein Khan, knowing how little he had to depend on the fidelity of the inhabitants, made no folly, lest he should be deserted by the people that followed him, or betrayed by those who staid behind in the town; so that he determined to make as good a defence as he could within the walls. This resolution, which was the only one he could take, enabled him to withstand the attacks of the enemy for the space of 25 days; and perhaps the length of the siege would have tired out the Lesgees, if the Sunnis, who kept a correspondence with the enemy, had not found means, in spite of all the vigilance of the governor, to open one of the gates to them. The besiegers rushed in immediately, making hideous shouts; but altho' the garrison was surprized, they were not beaten. All the Lesgees could compass that day, was to force their way to the Sunnis quarter, where they entrenched themselves. Early the next morning they marched out in good order, intending to complete the conquest of the city. The governor made some stand against them; but perceiving that he was de-
serted

serted or betrayed by his people, he determined at length to provide for his own safety. His loyalty and courage had prevented his taking this resolution in time; for the enemy having detached some cavalry after him, they soon came up with him, and brought him back to the town.

The situation of Shamakie rendered it a staple between the Russians and Persians^m; but the great plunder of it did not satisfy the avarice of the Lesgees: their generals were hurried by this base passion, to commit the most barbarous cruelties against Hussein Khan. They put him to the acutest tortures, imagining he had buried his treasure; but whether it was that this nobleman had not concealed any, or indifferent about his life he did not regard their fury, he made no discovery; for which reason they cut him in pieces, together with his nephew, and another of his relations, and flung their bodies to the dogs.

About 4000 inhabitants were put to the sword; and this massacre would have been greater, if many had not saved themselves the night on which the enemy entrenched themselves in the quarters of the Sunnis: for we must likewise observe, that the Lesgees put none to the sword of that sect. They also spared the wives and children of the Schias, not through any motive of compassion, but because, according to their law, the right of conquest had made them their slaves. The Sunnis and the Schias were not the only inhabitants of that city. There was likewise a considerable number of Armenians, Jews, Indian idolaters, and several Russian merchants; and tho' the conquerors granted no quarter to the Schias, whom they did not make slaves, yet they spared the lives and liberty of these different nations, considering them as strangers; thus a sense of justice hindered them from confounding them with their enemies. But this is to be understood only in regard to their property: for they stripped their habitations of every thing that was valuable. The Russians lost a great valueⁿ, which contributed to create new enemies against Persia, as we shall see hereafter.

So many misfortunes, upon the back of each other, completed the consternation of the divan. Shah Hussein, who had neither resolution enough to bear such a reverse of fortune, nor abilities sufficient to prevent any further ill consequences, was the first whom the weight of the burthen overcame. Being convinced that heaven had declared against

^m I have already remarked in Vol. I. the great loss sustained by Yeuriiinoff, a Russian merchant. ⁿ About 100,000/.

gainst him, he thought no longer of struggling with his misfortunes, but bent his whole attention to appease the divine wrath. All public diversions were forbidden; harlots were expelled the town; fastings and public prayers were ordained; and the ministers of religion appeared in the public squares and market-places, exhorting the people to avert, by a sincere repentance, the calamities impending over their heads. This conduct, if it was pious, was not politic, for it rendered the consternation general; the people in every part of the town being heard to say in a mournful voice, "Cheik Oglou ° has finished his career; the fatal period of his government is come; his tottering throne is going to crush us under its ruins."

In the mean time the Lesgees, who had made themselves masters of Shamakie, took possession of the rest of Shirvan; after which, knowing that the khan of Erivan had orders to throw himself into Ganja, they passed the Kura, and marched forward to meet him. Tho' this general was at the head of 40,000 men, yet he only contributed to increase the triumph of the rebels. Part of his army was cut to pieces in different engagements; the remainder fled towards Erivan: the Lesgees having made themselves masters of his camp and equipage, besieged him in Ganja, whether he had retired after his defeat.

C H A P. XXVII.

Mir Maghmud raises an army of 15,000 men. He marches towards Kherman, and makes himself master of that city; from thence he proceeds to Yezd, and lays siege to it, but is obliged to retire. He leads his army through deserts, towards Isfahan, and arrives at Gulnabad. The Persians prepare to oppose him. Different opinions in the divan upon that subject.

PERSIA thus saw herself threatened with a storm from all sides, when Mir Maghmud, the most formidable of her enemies, disclosed his ambitious designs. The Afghans disheartened by the defeat they had met with before Kherman, considered themselves as utterly undone, when they heard that Lutf Ali Khan was making preparations for the siege

° The king, who is the son of Cheik, a name given to the kings of Persia of the Sessie dynasty, because they were descended from Cheik Sessie

siege of Kandahar. The prudence and valour of this general; the number and discipline of his troops; and the quantity of ammunition and provisions with which his magazines were filled, made them conclude that their ruin was inevitable. In this situation, the whole nation seemed desirous of a peace, and waited only for the approach of the enemy to sue for it. But they no sooner were informed of the imprisonment of Lutf Ali Khan, and the disbanding of his army, than security and joy succeeded their fear. Mir Maghmud, whose authority had been in some measure destroyed by these melancholy circumstances, insensibly resumed the command of his people.

The first use which Maghmud made of this change, was to put himself in a condition of making a vigorous resistance, in case the Persians should determine to pursue their design. With this intent, he omitted nothing that might contribute to the security of the province; he raised troops, ordered arms to be made, and filled the magazines with every thing necessary to hold out a long siege. These preparations were just completed at Kandahar, when they heard of the extremity to which the city of Mesched was reduced. The news of the destruction of Tavis, and of the irruption of the Lefgees, followed soon after; and these different events eased the minds of the people, and gave their chief an opportunity of forming new resolutions.

Maghmud's apprehensions being thus removed, he began to think of becoming formidable in his turn: the hopes of conquests, which his last defeat seemed to have stifled, now crowded again upon his imagination. To dispose the Afghans to enter into his views, he reminded them of the several circumstances that ought to dissipate every thought of danger: he observed to them, that the provinces of Kandahar, Herat, Sablestan, Mecran, and Dagistan, had shaken off the yoke; that Segestan, Kherman, and the greatest part of the vast country of Khorasan had been ravaged, and Shirvan invaded; that the dispersion of the army which was under Lutf Ali Khan, and the oath of the Vali of Georgia, rendered Persia entirely defenceless. He put them in mind of the advantages which he had obtained over this nation, at a time when her power was really great; and relating the success of the Kourds, the Ousbegs, and the Mascats, he made the Afghans believe, that the throne was ready to fall a prey to the first who would venture to seize on it.

Such discourses as these, accompanied with several marks of his liberality, could not but make an impression on the minds of a people, who were naturally inclined to war. Hence they

they talked of nothing but conquests ; and the hopes of booty engaged 15,000 Afghans to list themselves under the banners of their chief. But Maghmud being sensible that these forces were not answerable to the greatness of his design, applied himself to the means of increasing them.

For this purpose he had no occasion for long negotiations : the restless and turbulent spirit of the neighbouring nations soon determined them in his favour. At the first news of an intended expedition into Persia, the Abollees, Balouches, the inhabitants of Cabul, and the neighbouring country flocked to him ; and in a very short time his army was greatly augmented by these adventurers of several countries and religions. But among the different chiefs who joined him, Aman Ola brought him the most considerable reinforcement. This captain, whom some have imagined to be a prince of Cabul, was originally only a simple dervise, but chusing a military life, was now at the head of a considerable body of troops, and joined Maghmud rather as an ally than as a subject : embarking in this enterprize, upon condition of making an equal division of the fruits of their conquests. The union of their forces did not constitute an army of above 25,000 fighting men : they took with them a few elephants for burthen, with a considerable number of camels ; these with their drivers, the servants of the soldiers, and the domestics of their chiefs, made this army appear much more formidable than it really was. Maghmud never had so many troops under his command before. They were scarce assembled, when this young chief full of ardour and hopes, began to carry his enterprize into execution. He entrusted the regency of Kandahar to his brother ; after which he crossed the deserts of Segestan, with the same precaution and fatigue as he had done the preceding year ; and entering Kherman towards the beginning of January this year, he sat down before the capital of that province.

This city did not make any long resistance. The Persees, and the Indians, who were settled there, having refused to fight against an army which consisted partly of troops of their own nation, soon obliged the remainder of the inhabitants, who in other respects were not prepared for a siege, to open the gates to the enemy. When Maghmud was master of the

The Persees are the descendants of the ancient Persians, who worshipped fire, and have preserved their religion. These people are best known in the east, and even among us, by the name of Gaur or Geber, which in the Persian language signifies an infidel or an idolater.

town, his next point was to take the citadel. He tried several times to carry it by assault; for as he had no cannon fit for a siege, this seemed the only way he could take it: but he met with such a warm and gallant reception from the garrison, which had been left there by Lutf Ali Khan, that he soon began to despair of success. Being thus provoked at a resistance which he did not expect, he knew not what measures to take. He was sensible of the consequences of his undertaking: he could not raise the siege without losing his reputation, by acknowledging himself defeated, at the very commencement of the campaign. Besides, how could he pretend, after miscarrying before so inconsiderable a place, to attack the capital of a vast empire? But it was yet a greater difficulty by what means to take a citadel strongly fortified, and provided with a numerous garrison. Some of the bravest of his men had thrown away their lives to no purpose; and several others, discouraged by the repulse, had already deserted him, and set out on their return to Kandahar; so that if he persisted in his design, it seemed to threaten the total dispersion of his army.

His mind was occupied with these reflections, when the governor, frightened at such vigorous attacks, or apprehensive of the want of provisions, offered to treat with the besiegers. He required that the army should raise the siege; and on his side he would pay, as an indemnity or ransom, 2500 tomans. Tho' the tendency of this extraordinary capitulation was to preserve, and not surrender the place, yet the present circumstances were such, that the proposals were received with joy. As soon as the money was paid, the hostilities which had been already suspended, intirely ceased.

Fortune having thus favoured Maghmud, he now thought of pursuing his first design. He had lost 4000 men in crossing the desert, and at the siege; but the present conjuncture gave him a fair occasion of reinforcing his army. Many of the inhabitants of Kherman are Persees, who from the remembrance of their past grandeur, being enemies of the reigning nation, were naturally inclined to espouse the cause of a prince, whom they considered as the scourge of their tyrants.

A few days after the capitulation, Maghmud marched at the head of his army towards the north, taking the road to Yezd. This city is situate about seventy leagues from Kherman: the country between is very sandy, and has only a few inconsiderable villages, at a great distance from each other. This circumstance shews, that this prince's view was not to enrich himself with the spoils of the open country, in the fruit-
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ful plains of Fars*: his thoughts were engaged upon another object; and he avoided every thing that might retard the execution of his design. He knew very well that he should not meet on this road with any fortress that might stop him, or with towns where his troops might be incumbered with pillage. It was with this very intent he preferred the road through the deserts, upon his first setting out, instead of taking the ordinary rout, which was much shorter and easier.

As soon as he arrived before Yezd, he attempted to take the town by assault, attacking it with all his troops on every side; but he was on every side repulsed with loss. Being grown more circumspect by his mistakes, he resolved not to persist in the siege, the consequence of which must be extremely dangerous. He therefore continued his march; and after having proceeded with all possible expedition through the plains†, which separate the city of Pahanavens from that of Biben, at length he entered the cultivated country. The people, terrified at his approach, deserted the villages and towns that lay in his way; so that nothing retarded the rapidity of his march. At length, having dispersed some troops that seemed to have been sent rather to reconnoitre than to fight, he arrived within four days march of Isfahan; when two officers, who were deputed by the court, were conducted into his presence.

Mahommed Kouli Khan, then prime minister‡, not knowing how to avert so sudden a storm, had sent these officers to treat with him: accordingly they opened their commission, which was to offer him a sum of 15,000 tomans§, on condition that he would not proceed any farther, and that his troops should commit no devastation in the territory of Isfahan. Maghmud judged from hence of the weakness and terror of the enemy, and dismissing the deputies without making any answer, advanced with his usual diligence, and pitched his camp at Gulnabad¶.

It is far easier to imagine, than to describe the terror with which the king and his ministers were seized, when they heard that Maghmud was marching directly to Isfahan. They had lulled themselves into security, from a persuasion that this prince would not leave behind him unconquered so vast a tract of country; and little thought that he would open the campaign in the very center of the empire; consequently they had not made the necessary preparations to oppose him. Hence there

* Farfistan or Persia properly so called. † This country abounds in nitre. ‡ Athemat Dou et. § 37,500 l. ¶ Signifies conserve of roses. This village is three leagues from Isfahan.

there was neither ammunition nor provisions in Isfahan; and as the celerity of the march of the rebels, had not afforded time to collect the different bodies of troops, that were dispersed on the frontiers, they were absolutely at a loss how to stem the torrent. However, as something must be done, they collected the few troops that were at hand; to these they joined the militia, that was raised in a hurry in the city and the neighbourhood; and all the lords of the court, excepting those whose profession was inconsistent with arms, being ready to mount on horse-back, the army waited only the king's orders.

As this monarch was incapable of forming any resolution himself, he waited with impatience to hear what the divan would determine. In time of distress, when an union of counsels is most necessary, the pusillanimity of some, and the wickedness of others, generally create perplexity. The council was divided in opinion: the prime minister gave his advice not to hazard a general action, but to intrench their army, and cover the town. "By this means," said he, "our new troops will be insensibly accustomed to see the enemy; a few skirmishes will rouse a martial spirit by degrees; if the rebels attempt to force our lines, we shall fight them to an advantage; if this measure should oblige them to continue in their camp, it will be an easy thing to starve them, by cutting off their provisions: thus the issue of the war will be protracted, and the troops dispersed in the provinces will have time to join us, and cut off the retreat of the rebels."

This was the opinion of the Athemat Doulet. On the contrary, Abdallah Khan, Vali of Arabia, now at Isfahan, maintained, "that it was beneath the majesty of the empire to temporize with rebels and slaves; that the grandeur of the king, and the honour of the nation, were concerned to chastise their insolence. Why," said he, "should the frontiers be exposed to new invasions? The king's troops are incensed; they long for battle; the best way therefore is to make use of this first ardour of the soldiers, and to crush an infatuated youth, who by the victory of Lutf Ali Khan, and his miscarriages at Kherman and Yezd, ought to have learnt the difference between soldiers and robbers."

The Athemat Doulet's advice was certainly the most prudent and safe; but that of the Arabian prince suited most with the pride and revenge with which the divan was animated. Persia devoted to ruin, had hardly a single advocate devoid of passion, and whose mind was free from prejudice or treachery; the latter opinion was preferred by the plurality of suffrages, and as soon as they heard that the Afghans were arrived at Gulnabad,

Gulnabad, the army received orders to march and fight them. Maghmud was not surprized at this determination: for he never dreamt that the king would submit to see his capital besieged, without trying the issue of a battle; and therefore as he knew neither the number nor valour of his enemies, he intrenched himself in his camp.

C H A P. XXVIII.

The Persian army marches to fight the Afghans. The day of battle is fixed by the astrologers. Order of battle, and disposition of both armies. The singular conduct of the two princeesses of Loristan. Particular account of the battle of Gulnabad. Cause of the success of the Afghans. Reflexion on the conduct of the Vali of Arabia.

THE seventh of March the Persian army appeared within sight of the enemy's intrenchments; but Shah Houssein having, by the advice of his astrologers, fixed the eighth of that month for the engagement, there passed only some light skirmishes the first day. It was given out in the Persian camp, that Maghmud, surprized at the number and beauty of the king's troops, proposed to make his escape with a thousand of his best horse. The Persian generals spread these reports in order to encourage their soldiers; for they could not really think, that this prince intended to sacrifice, by an ignominious flight, his subjects and allies to the fury of an enemy, in search of whom he had made so long and so extraordinary a march.

Sunday the eighth of March, according to the vain prognostics of the astrologers, was to deliver the Persian monarchy. The generals began early in the morning to range their troops in order of battle. On the side of the Persians; the center, which seemed to be designed only for a body of reserve, was given to Cheik Ali Khan, general of horse. He had under him several khans with their troops, 4000 of the king's horse, and the same number of his foot guards; the latter being armed with musquets and sabres: these were covered at some distance by a battery of 24 pieces of cannon, defended, and served by 2000 cannoneers, under the command of Mahommed Khan, grand master of the artillery*.

The right wing was formed of 2000 of those horsemen who are called the king's slaves†, some of whom are armed with bows and arrows, and others with fusils and pistols; there were likewise some khans, and several other lords with their attendants. This wing was under the command of Rostam

* Topchi Bachi.

† Kulams.

Khan, the Koular Agasi^z, brother of Vachtanga, Vali of Georgia. The Vali of Arabia, who shared the general command of the army with the Athemat Doulet, had strengthened this wing with a body of 3000 cavalry of his own nation, at the head of whom he intended to fight.

The Athemat Doulet commanded in the left wing, which was composed of the king's household; the lords belonging to the court, and the rest of the nobility. Ali Merdan Khan³, Vali of Loristan^b, joined them in person with 500 horse. Such was the order of battle in the king's army. They had, besides the forces above-mentioned, 18,000 infantry of militia, raised upon this occasion in the neighbourhood of the city, who were armed with musquets. The different troops formed all together a body of near 50,000 fighting men.

There is no agreement in the accounts of those who were at Istahan during the siege, in regard to the number of soldiers in Maghmud's army, the most probable opinion is, that it was not above half the number of the king's troops. It consisted chiefly of cavalry; these were armed with a sabre and lance, which those people handle with equal dexterity; their defensive armour are a buckler and cuirass, made of a double fold of hard leather, and many of them carry pistols. Their whole army was divided into four unequal parts: the most numerous formed the right wing under the command of Aman Ola. Maghmud was in the second division, which he placed in the center: he gave the command of the third to Nasr Ullah a Persee, whom he had made one of his lieutenant-generals: and the fourth and least numerous of these bodies, were choice men of the Pehlevans or Næssakhchi^c. The length and celerity of Maghmud's march, as we have observed, did not permit him to bring any cannon with him: but he supplied this defect in some measure by a very extraordinary artillery: these are a kind of harquebusses, which carry a handful of musquet balls; each of these pieces, with its stock, was mounted on a camel, which lay down at command;

and

^z General of the slaves. ^a It is affirmed that two daughters of this prince attended him in his former expeditions against the Turks in mens habits, and now fought by his side.

^b The province of Loristan is a mountainous country, that formerly depended on Chosistan, or the ancient Susiana; but having been peopled by colonies of the Kurds, it was afterwards comprized in Kourdistan. Berongierth a place situate near Hamadan, is its principal fortress. We must take care not to confound this place with Laristan, which is on the sea coast.

^c The name which the Afghans give to their forlorn hope, which go on the most desperate actions.

and from the backs of these animals, trained to this exercise, they charged and fired these arms.

The sun had just appeared on the horizon, when the armies began to observe each other with that curiosity, so natural on these dreadful occasions. The Persian army just come out of the capital, being composed of whatever was most brilliant at court, seemed as if it had been formed rather to make a shew than to fight. The riches and variety of their arms and vestments; the beauty of their horses; the gold and precious stones with which some of their harnesses were covered; and the richness of their tents, contributed to render the Persian camp very pompous and magnificent.

On the other side there was a much smaller body of soldiers, disfigured with fatigue, and the scorching heat of the sun. Their cloaths were so ragged and torn, in so long a march, that they were scarce sufficient to cover them from the weather; and their horses being adorned with only leather and brass, there was nothing glittering among them but their spears and sabres.

The two armies stood in sight of each other the greatest part of the day, without making any motion on either side, but seeming rather to stand in mutual awe. Maghmud embraced this opportunity to ride through the ranks, and to encourage his soldiers. "He represented to the Persians, that the hour was now come, which would free them from the yoke of their tyrants; that liberty was now in their own hands, if they would prove themselves, on this occasion, worthy heirs of the valour of their ancestors." Turning to the Afghans and the Balouches, "he exhorted them to fight with that bravery which had rendered them so often triumphant over their enemies; he reminded them of those glorious feats, and desired them to look upon the riches of Ifsahan as the first fruit of an easy victory; a victory, without which they must inevitably perish, either by the sword in their retreat, or by hunger and thirst in the deserts."

While Maghmud was thus endeavouring to inspire his troops with that ardour, which they stood in need of on so important a conjuncture, the Persians were taken up in debates. Though the king had sent positive orders to fight, yet the Arhemat Doulet, who shared the general command with the Vali of Arabia, insisted strongly that they should avoid coming to an engagement: "It is true," said he, "we may expect the most generous efforts of the Persian valour, on an occasion in which the safety of the empire, and the Nadir Shah afterwards used these kind of arms with great success: they are long, and carry a great distance.

“liberty of the emperor are at stake: but what does valour
 “avail, if it be not armed and directed by experience? Al-
 “most all our infantry, who are the principal part of our for-
 “ces, are novices in the duty of a soldier; they are entire
 “strangers to the use of the musquet; and have we then any
 “reason to expect that they will be able, in this undisciplined
 “state, to stand the shock of the enemy’s cavalry, or to at-
 “tack in such order as to pierce thro’ their squadrons? Too
 “much security is oftentimes the cause, that even the best
 “concerted undertakings miscarry. Let us not despise an
 “enemy whom fortune favours: we have 4000 pioneers with
 “us, let these cover the army with intrenchments; and if you
 “are absolutely determined to hazard a battle, these lines bor-
 “dered with cannon and infantry will be a sure place of re-
 “treat, in case of a misfortune. But my opinion, is to wait till
 “famine compels the enemy to attack us in our entrench-
 “ments; then our cavalry falling forth from the extremi-
 “ties, will take them in flank; and will meet with so much
 “the less resistance, as they will have to deal with troops al-
 “ready shattered and broken by the continual fire to which
 “they must be exposed.”

Thus the Athemat Doulet endeavoured to bring them over
 to an opinion, which differed but little from that which he had
 openly declared in council. The proposal was prudent, inas-
 much as it left very little to hazard, and secured all the ad-
 vantage that ought to be expected from their infantry, which
 otherwise must be useless. The officers who commanded in
 the center, struck with these reasons, had already approved
 the project; when the Vali of Arabia, and the Koular Agassi,
 who were afraid lest this opinion should be followed by the
 rest of the principal officers, cried out: “This is no time
 “to debate, but to fight; it would be an eternal shame to so
 “numerous an army, in which is the flower of the nobility
 “of the empire, to be afraid of appearing before a gang of
 “robbers and rebel herdsmen.” Saying this, they waited for
 no answer, but retired, and mounting led on their squadrons
 against the enemy: this served as a signal to the troops, who
 all moved forward at the same time, and fell upon the left
 wing of the Afghans with such impetuosity, as flung them in-
 to disorder.

Maghmud, who observed both armies from a throne
 raised on the back of an elephant, was surprized at this shock,
 and began to think that all was lost. His alarm was caused by
 the Vali of Arabia, who having made a long winding to the
 right

• The general of horse, and the general of the artillery.

right at the head of a body of Arabian cavalry, overthrew all he met in his way, and made himself master of the camp of the Afghans. It is reasonable to believe, that the affair would have been soon determined in favour of the Persians, if he had returned directly and charged the enemy in the rear. Maghmud, terrified at the danger, was preparing for flight, and had ordered the lightest of his dromedaries to be made ready for him; when a circumstance arose, that inspired him with more courageous resolutions. The Athemat Doulat seeing both armies engaged, returned to his post, and charged the right wing of the enemy with as much bravery, as he had before given marks of prudence. Aman Ola, who commanded that wing, made a feint of giving way, and retired gradually without breaking his ranks; but he had hardly let the enemy gain fifty paces upon him, when ordering his men to open their ranks of a sudden, one hundred camels appeared kneeling, each of which had one of the harquebuses above-mentioned on his back. The Persians astonished at this unexpected sight, and a general discharge of this little artillery being made, most of the fore-most rank were killed, and the Afghans making loud shouts, attacked the rest, and obliged them to turn their backs.

Aman Ola made the proper use of this stratagem: for without giving the Persians time to recover themselves, he pursued them up to their battery, which he came behind, and having cut the cannoneers in pieces that guarded it, he caused the cannon to be pointed against the center of the Persian army, who were thus put to flight before they had fought a blow. This artful step decided the fate of the day. The Vali of Loristan, who had lost one of his brothers in the action, and had been also wounded himself, seeing every thing rendered desperate by the defeat of the left wing, and of the center, went off directly with what soldiers he had remaining, and retired into his province. His example was followed by Ferez Oullah, Khan of Hamadan, and by Ali Rizi Khan of Cokkilar, who having called off their troops, retired each to his respective province.

In the mean time, the Vali of Arabia having made himself master of Maghmud's camp, amused himself with plundering the baggage; and tho' he had observed the enemy's motion, yet instead of attacking them in the rear, as was expected, he refused the succours, that with repeated instances were demanded of him. The Afghans therefore had no enemy to oppose, except the Koular Agassi. This general endeavouring to vindicate his opinion given in council, continued to fight with

A country situate ten days journey from Isfahan towards Bassora,

redoubled courage and resolution. Being determined to conquer or die, he had already cut part of the opposite wing in pieces, and pushed the remainder as far as their entrenchments, when Maghmud seeing the field almost clear of the enemy, advanced to take him in the rear. This motion dispersed the Persians, who composed the greatest part of the troops of this gallant officer; but a body of 400 Georgians refusing to desert him in this extremity, he defended himself on all sides with the utmost intrepidity; till at length, after having two horses killed under him, he was overpowered with numbers, and with the companions of his glorious temerity, died sword in hand. The defeat of this valiant troop completed the victory. The Vali of Arabia loaded with Maghmud's treasure, and with the plunder of the camp, had by this time taken the road to the town, which he entered by the opposite gate ^{to} that by ^{which} the army had marched out against the enemy.

Such was the fatal issue of the battle of Gulnabad, in which the Persians, so long accustomed to blunders in politics, took two dangerous steps; one was, to divide the command between two generals who did not agree; the other, to plant their batteries so forward, that they could not be properly supported. This last circumstance, and the sagacious conduct of Aman Ola, gave the victory to the Afghans: but we may say, that the treacherous conduct of the Vali Arabia decided the battle. The king's army lost 15,000 men; a number which will not appear exaggerated, if we consider the circumstances of the engagement. The greatest part of the troops under the command of the Koular Agassi, fell in the field of battle; the infantry was in a great measure exposed to the mercy of the conqueror; and the 2000 cannoneers, with their general were all slaughtered at their post. The loss of the Afghans was inconsiderable; and the treasure, the artillery, and baggage of the Persian army, was an ample recompence for the plunder which the Arabians had taken in their camp.

PART

The Der Tokchi in the east part of Isfahan. The Hajan in the west. It has been much doubted, if the Vali of Arabia was induced to act this base part, merely from the temptation of plunder; or from resentment of the opposition which the Athamat Doulet made to his proposals; he might be indifferent, at that time, which side obtained the victory, but his conduct afterwards proved him a traitor; nor do we find that he attempted to vindicate his conduct, or acknowledge that he had been guilty of an error, nor even that the natural avidity of his Arabians was not to be restrained.

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length, after having two horses killed under him, he was

REVOLUTIONS of PERSIA,

FROM THE

BATTLE of GULNABAD

TO THE

Abdication of SULTAN HUSSEIN, and the

taking of Isfahan.

CHAP. XXIX.

The king calls a council, and determines to remain in Isfahan.

Preparations to defend the city. Orders sent to the khans of
the provinces. The Vali of Loristan is declared generalissi-
mo. Mahmud encamps at Cheerestan. Description of

Farabad; the Afghans take possession of it, and appear be-
fore Julfa. Description of Julfa, and the situation of the

Armenians.

AS soon as the news arrived of the defeat of
the Persian army, which was commanded 1722.

by the greatest part of the nobility of the

kingdom, the city of Isfahan was under a general con-
sternation. The Persian troops, who fled from the field of

battle, exaggerated the valour and conduct of the enemy,
which served to increase the panic; inasmuch, that the in-

habitants of this great city already figured to themselves the
distresses which followed not long after, and imagined they

saw the Afghans, with their drawn sabres, practising all
imaginable barbarities.

Under these extremities the king called a council, in which he represented the danger his person would be exposed to, if he stood a siege in a city unprovided with ammunition and provisions; and whose ruinous walls could be but a feeble barrier, when defended by troops disheartened by their late defeat. His danger had however inspired him with some degree of fortitude; and with an air of dignity, in a very pathetic strain, he spoke to them to this effect: "It is not for my own security, that I propose to remove; a prince, who is afraid to die with his subjects, is unworthy to rule over them: but the greatest part of the provinces still obey me; their fate is connected with mine; for the rebel will be master of the empire, as soon as he has my person in his power."

The Athemat Doulet confirmed the king's remarks; adding, that it would be very imprudent to expose the king's person to the hazard of such an event; that it would be adviseable for his majesty to retire that very night to Casbin, while the enemy, yet intoxicated with their victory, would take no measures to oppose his retreat; that when the Shah should be at full liberty, he might easily assemble an army, capable to raise the siege, and destroy the Afghans: that at all events, the loss of Isfahan would be only the loss of one city, which Maghmud could not keep with so small a number of troops; whereas, if the king should shut himself up there, the loss of Isfahan would draw on that of the monarchy.

This speech seemed to convince the greatest part of the assembly; when the Vali of Arabia, who had so basely betrayed his trust that very day, and yet, by a strange fatality, was continued in his office, stood up, and spoke to this effect: "It is debating to a great disadvantage, just after the loss of a battle. Whilst men are affected with fear, in consequence of a recent misfortune, whatever their natural intrepidity and discernment may be, they are but ill capable of distinguishing the real magnitude of objects: even prudence loses its very nature, and betrays itself. A panic terror, caused by a trifling unforeseen accident, has snatched the victory out of our hands. Ought such an accident, which is not uncommon in war, to make us tremble before a weak and contemptible enemy? Besides, were it presumed that their chief will undertake to lay siege to so large and so populous a city as this, he would hardly dare to enter it with the contemptible gang of robbers about him. What is there then to fear? If he should

“ should be bold enough to appear before our walls, the
 “ presence of the Shah will encourage their defenders;
 “ and the whole empire, incensed at this attempt, will fly
 “ to the assistance of their sovereign. But if his majesty
 “ should deprive these loyal inhabitants of the opportunity
 “ of exerting that valour, which his presence inspires, such
 “ a step would not only stain his honour, but dishearten all
 “ his faithful subjects, and encourage the revolted: such a
 “ behaviour, much sooner than the force of arms, will
 “ open Isfahan to the conqueror; and the rest of the em-
 “ pire, amazed to see a base Sunni¹ on the sacred throne
 “ of the successors of Ali, will not stir in defence of their
 “ prince, because they will conclude his fate irretrievable.”

The boldest opinion prevailed over the most prudent. Shah Hussein was ashamed to abandon his capital, and therefore determined to defend it; so that nothing more was thought on, than to make a vigorous resistance against the enemy. New levies were made; the ruinous parts of the walls were repaired; intrenchments were thrown up in those places which were most exposed, and especially at the head of the bridges which open a communication with the suburbs; and every other precaution taken, that the proximity of the danger, and the inexperience of the ministers would permit. The Vali of Arabia was appointed governor of the town; and Shah Hussein sent messengers to the khans of the different provinces yet under his dominion, ordering them to repair with all the forces of their governments to Honsar^k, where they were to join the Vali of Lorient, whom he had declared generalissimo of his armies. In fine, this monarch, more sensible than ever of the mistake he committed in treating the Vali of Georgia with such imperiousness, sent magnificent presents to this prince, and wrote to him in the most pressing manner, to persuade him to march to his assistance.

These regulations were prudent and suitable to the situation of affairs; but in the interim proper care was not taken to provide for a siege. The inhabitants of the open country, flying from the cruelty of the conqueror, flung themselves in crowds into the city; insomuch that the public squares, the gardens, and the streets, were every day filled with this useless multitude. The king, who did not con-

sider
 It may be presumed that he pretended to be a Schias, tho' he was a Sunni himself.

* This city is said to be about five leagues from Isfahan.

sider the difference between a common man and a soldier, not only neglected giving orders upon this subject, but seemed to forget that there were no magazines of provisions in the city; and the dictates of fear suggesting to him, that his security must arise from his numbers, he forbade upon pain of death, every person in Isfahan, whether inhabitant or stranger, to stir from thence. In the mean while some Arabs who had been sent upon the scout, having brought intelligence, that the rebels had left on the field of battle the twenty-four pieces of cannon, which they had taken in the engagement, a detachment of troops was sent to bring back the artillery; which they executed without any obstruction from the enemy, who continued quietly in their camp.

This inactivity was owing to the wavering disposition of Maghmud: he, who had hitherto shewn himself active and enterprising, now seemed astonished at his own victory. The little success he had at Kherman and Yezd; the vast extent of Isfahan, and the number of troops within its walls, gave him reason to apprehend, that the siege would be of long continuance; and that the governors of the provinces would have time to crush him with the joint forces of the empire: on the other hand, he could not with honour, nor common safety, abandon an enterprize, which had already cost him so much labour. Thus his mind was agitated with these different thoughts, when the return of the spies, whom he had sent into the city, removed his anxiety. By these he was informed of the great consternation into which the Persians were thrown; from whence he concluded, that if instead of giving the enemy time to recover themselves, he had pursued them to the gates of Isfahan, he might have made himself master that very day of the king's throne and person. He resolved therefore to pursue his fortune. With this view he began his march, and plundering every place by the way, he encamped the 12th of the same month with his whole army near Cheerestan, a town a little to the eastward of Isfahan.

The Persians finding the Afghans had abandoned the artillery abovementioned, began to think they had no intention to lay siege to the town; but this motion of the enemy's army undeceived them, as to the fond expectation they

It is hard to reconcile this conduct, otherwise than by supposing that the Afghans might be ignorant of the art of rendering the cannon useless, and finding them cumbersome, chose to neglect them.

they had entertained, concerning the retreat of the Afghans. The first step they took in consequence of this discovery, was to abandon Farabad, a country-palace three miles from Isfahan. Shah Hussein, who had exhausted the treasures amassed by the kings his predecessors, to indulge his passion for building, had spared no expence to render this palace worthy of a great monarch. In fact, it was so spacious and magnificent, that he had often entertained thoughts of abandoning the capital, to make this his ordinary residence. The palace was encompassed with strong lofty walls, flanked at small distances with towers. In his present circumstances, this place ought therefore to have been considered as a fortress which might incommode the enemy, or at least retard their operations; but the rebels were scarce arrived at Cheerestan, when orders were sent to abandon Farabad; which was executed in so imprudent a manner, that altho' the Persian garrison might have easily carried off the cannon, they contented themselves with burying them,

This was too gross a blunder to escape the Afghans: some of their squadrons who were upon the scout, hearing what had passed, marched with all expedition, and took possession of the castle and its artillery, the 19th of the same month, without meeting with any opposition: they were soon joined by the rest of the army. Maghmud being now advantageously situated, and master of several pieces of cannon, determined to repair the loss of time, occasioned by his late irresolution; accordingly he mounted on horse-back, and appeared the same day before Julfa.

This town is situated only a mile and a half south of Isfahan, on the south banks of the river Zenderoud, or fresh river, on the side of which it is extended for almost three miles. It was founded by Abas the Great, on the following occasion. The Armenians having revolted against the Turks, and submitted to this prince, he removed part of the inhabitants of Armenia into different provinces of Persia. Those of the antient Julfa, a town on the banks of the Aras, were transported to Isfahan, from whence they afterwards removed, and settled in this place, to which they gave the name of their former residence. The people who had been drawn from Erivan, Shirvan^m, and the lower Armenia, had settled in the suburbs of Isfahan; but Abas desirous of improving this new colony, obliged them to remove to Julfa, together with some Persees of the neighbourhood

^m Part of the ancient Media.

bourhood of Kherman and Yezd; by this means, four new quarters were formed. Most of the Persees took occasion to retire from thence, so that of fifteen hundred families, which were at first computed in their quarter, there remained only three hundred, all composed of artificers and labouring men. But the Armenians being an industrious active people, applied themselves to commerce, and by their care this colony soon arose to a flourishing condition.

Abas I. was too great a politician, to neglect any measure that might contribute to the welfare of such an establishment. He lent them considerable sums of money, without demanding any interest; he exempted them from all kinds of servitude; he granted them the free exercise of their religion; and in order to screen them from the jealousy and avarice of the Persian officers, he allowed them a Kalenter of their own nation, to whom he assigned a place at those celebrated feasts, in which, pursuant to the custom of remotest antiquity, the kings of Persia dine in public with the grandes of the realm.

Some of the successors of this prince followed the same maxim, and Julfa in a very little time became a considerable place. It had the appearance of a republic, founded in the midst of a foreign nation; no Mahomedan was permitted to settle there, and the rigour of the law of retaliation, caused the inhabitants to be respected even by the Persians themselves. The Armenians of Julfa thus encouraged by so necessary a protection, were in a thriving condition for many years; and carried on in different parts of the world a considerable trade, which was very useful to the state. But the court at length, forgetful of its own interests, grew tired of favouring them; and in Shah Hussein's reign, their privileges, which had suffered some diminution under his predecessors, fell into contempt. Under this government, no regard was paid to the law of retaliation. The ecclesiastics offended at the equality which this law established between mussulmen and christians, introduced a custom, that if a Persian killed an Armenian, he should expiate the crime by giving a load of corn to the relations of the deceased. The Armenians considered so ignominious and unjust a treatment, as a mark of servitude: but they had no relief, and were equally a sport to the avarice of the great, and the insolence of the people. While they groaned under these calamities, industry declined among them; and the spirit of commerce, for which they had been so much distinguished, was in a great measure suppressed; so that they thought of little more than to preserve their lives, and the property they had already acquired.

C H A P. XXX.

The conduct of the Persians towards the Armenians of Julfa. The Afghans make themselves masters of Julfa; their barbarities towards the Armenians. Description of Isfahan. Maghmud repulsed at the bridge of Shiras.

THE Armenians having been thus treated with great contempt, it was feared they would cherish a resentment, which might induce them to change their masters. The Persians, at least, tho' they now stood in such need of their services, were jealous; and in this, as in many other instances, prepared the way to their own ruin, for fear of being undone. For the Armenians, who are brave, and tenacious of their property, it ought naturally to have been expected, would have struggled hard to be delivered from a rapacious enemy: however, upon the first news of Maghmud's arrival, the king enjoined them to appear with their military equipage before his palace, intending, as he said, to entrust them with the guard of his person, during the absence of his household troops, who were going to march against the rebels. The Armenians, flattered with this testimony of benevolence, repaired to the place appointed in great numbers; but no sooner were they drawn up, than they were commanded to lay down their arms, and dismissed with strict orders, to deliver up what arms might be still remaining among them. Tho' such a mark of distrust was more proper to provoke, than to soften the minds of a brave people; yet as soon as the Armenians knew that the Afghans were advancing, they desired succour, offering to maintain the troops at their own expence. They repeated their instances, as the rebels approached; and finding that the Vali of Arabia, who had promised to send them assistance, broke his word, they still put themselves in a posture of making as good a defence, as their situation and circumstances would permit.

Things were thus situated, when the Afghans appeared before Julfa: they attacked the place as soon as they arrived, which was in the night-time; and the assault lasted two hours. The besieged, in order to make the enemy believe they had regular troops, called one another during the engagement by Persian names; and tho' they were very indifferently armed, yet they defended themselves with so much bravery, that the utmost the enemy could do, was to seize upon a little entrenchment, which had been thrown up in a hurry. The Armenians, encouraged by this success, waited for the Vali of

of Arabia, designing to attack the Afghans in their turn, as soon as they had any succour; but this general made them sensible of the indifference he bore to the common cause: for instead of keeping his word with them, observing that Seffie Myrzaⁿ was marching during the attack at the head of a detachment of horse, in order to make a diversion, he hindered him from proceeding any further, by representing that the king his father did not intend that the presumptive heir of the crown should expose himself to so dangerous an encounter.

This extraordinary proceeding, together with that of disarming the Armenians, induced people to think, that it was the king's intention to sacrifice Julfa and its inhabitants to the safety of the capital. Nor is it altogether improbable, that this weak prince, through the instigation of his treacherous minister, the Vali of Arabia, might imagine that the Afghans would be contented with the wealth they should find in that town, without persisting in so hazardous an enterprize as the siege of Isfahan. This Arabian prince, by religion a Sunni, and actuated with the same ambition as his father, who thirty years before had attempted to shake off the Persian yoke, either held a correspondency with Maghmud, which is most probable; or was governed by the pernicious maxim of those generals, who to prolong their own authority, do not choose to terminate a war, when it is in their power to bring things to a fortunate issue for their sovereigns and their country.

The Armenians had not time to refresh themselves after the fatigues of the first assault, but were preparing against a second, when some of the besiegers taking the advantage of the obscurity of the night, went all round the town, to try if a breach was practicable in their walls of earth. A Persian in their service, undertook to pierce a hole through the wall, which having done to his purpose, an elephant was brought up to it, and by his means a part of those feeble ramparts was broke down: Nazr Ulla, who commanded the party, took possession of the breach; and the Armenians perceiving that he waited only for day-light to enter, deputed the chief persons among them, before the night was spent, to treat of a capitulation. The Afghan heard their proposals, as one who was sure of conquest;

ⁿ This was Hussein's eldest son, who was of a martial spirit, and therefore an object of jealousy among the eunuchs.

o Those of Isfahan are of the same kind, as indeed are almost all the fortified places in the kingdom.

quest: he obliged them to surrender at discretion, and to ransom their lives and effects, by a contribution of 70,000 tomans.

Hard as this condition appeared to the Armenians, Maghmud added another more severe; for scarce had he been master of Julfa, when he demanded of the Armenians a certain number of young virgins, which they should pick out of the most considerable families of their nation. The Afghans were masters of the town; so that the Armenians had no other resolution to take than that of submission. All the young women therefore that could be found, who were remarkable for their beauty, and whose age exceeded nineteen, were brought before certain persons appointed for this examination: those chose fifty out of the number, and conducted them to Farabad, adorned with their richest cloaths, and with all their jewels, where they were presented to the conqueror. Maghmud kept part of them for his own harram, and distributed the remainder among his principal officers.

The Armenians are very jealous of their honour, so that nothing could cut them deeper than to deliver up their daughters. The disconsolate mothers made Julfa resound with their lamentations; some of those young maids were so shocked to see themselves abandoned to the enemies of their country, that they died with excessive grief. The Afghans, whose hearts could not but feel, in some measure, the distress of these young women, and whose religion by no means allows of any violence, sent those home who were most afflicted; and others were ransomed by their parents; so that in a few days there remained but a very small part of them in this kind of slavery.

The Afghans, humane in this respect, were inexorable in regard to the contribution. The Armenians pretending that the chief part of their effects was in Isfahan, said they were under an absolute impossibility of paying such a sum. They offered, however, to enter into an obligation of paying it, as soon as they recovered their effects, that is, upon the taking of the city, or at the conclusion of a peace. This was making the fruits of the first success depend upon a new event. Maghmud, pretended to be satisfied with the proposal; but as soon as he had their bond in his hands, he ordered three of the principal men among them, who had signed it, to be arrested as sureties; and pretending that his treasure was exhausted, he insisted up-

on their paying immediately what money they had in their hands, as part of the sum. In consequence of this determination, he ordered their houses to be searched. The Armenians, whose avarice had caused them to overshoot their mark^a, began to be sensible of the folly they had committed, in endeavouring to evade the payment; but it was too late to rectify the mistake. The officers who made the search, discharged their commission with the utmost exactness; carrying off every valuable thing they could find, as gold, silver, jewels, moveables, rich silks, &c. so that the inhabitants, except the security of their persons, experienced on this occasion, almost every act of violence and barbarity, as when a town is taken by storm.

All this wealth did not satisfy the avarice of the conqueror; recourse was had to tortures, in order to increase it. The principal persons among the Armenians were most cruelly bastinadoed, to compel them to discover the several effects, which they, and their friends, were supposed to have concealed. None of them could withstand the severity of the torture, except Dominic Jaques Kardelans, a man of weight and figure among his countrymen, and pretty far advanced in years, whom all the rigour of this punishment could not oblige to discover any other person. From this man and his brothers they took twelve thousand tomans^r; in ready money, and seven thousand^s from Sherimans^t; hence it is very probable, that what they got by plunder, greatly exceeded the sum demanded: and yet it was valued at only twenty thousand tomans^u, which he ordered to be struck off from the seventy thousand mentioned in the bond.

Such acts of violence flung the whole town into the utmost consternation: the missionaries withdrew to Isfahan, each order leaving only one religious person in their house. The bishop, and some of the inhabitants, took the same resolution; and tho' the Armenians were not ignorant, that the Persians accused them of holding a correspondence with the enemy, yet a great many of them had already thrown themselves into the town, and others were preparing to follow their example, when Maghmud ordered guards to be posted, to hinder any further desertion.

While

^a See remark, Vol. I. page 100. ^r 30,000 l. ^s 17,500.

^t These are remarkable great traders to this day; Nadir in 1747, caused some of them to be burnt alive, to extort a confession of their wealth. ^u 50,000 l. in part of 175,000.

While Julfa was thus a prey to the avarice and cruelty of the rebels; their chief was preparing to begin the siege of Isfahan. This city is distinguished, no less for the magnificence of its buildings, than for the vast tract it incloses; the circumference being ordinarily computed at 24 miles, including its gardens and suburbs. It is situated in a plain to the North of the Zenderoud, which separates it from Julfa. The source of this river is distant only three days journey: there are various accounts concerning the course of it, but it is agreed to be of very small extent. Abas the Great caused a channel to be cut thro' the mountains, thirty leagues distant, by which means the waters of the river Mahmoud Ker, were conveyed into the Zenderoud; which renders it as wide and deep, upon the melting of the snows in the spring, as the Seine is in the winter at Paris.

There is a communication between the two banks of the river by different bridges. The largest and finest is that of Julfa: it is 360 geometrical paces in length, and 13 in breadth; the two extremities of it are flanked by four round towers, with a covered gallery, which ranges on both sides, the length of the bridge; the whole decorated with the richest ornaments of Persian architecture. It is joined by two causeways, made with a gentle descent to a double row of trees above 3000 paces long. This delightful alley is lined with terrasses and plane trees: it is called Toherbag, or four gardens, and is bordered with gardens which belong to the king. The length of it is terminated by a large pavilion towards the town, and on the opposite side by a building, in the royal garden, called Hazar Jerib, or thousand gardens. The town of Julfa on the one side, and the suburb of Abasabad on the other, stretch along the Zenderoud: from the bridge of Julfa to the bridge Abasabad is about a mile and a half: the last is so called from the neighbouring suburb, and serves as a communication to the western extremity of the town.

The bridge of Barbaroui, which is less distant than that of Abasabad from the bridge of Julfa, is the third we meet with descending: like the latter it is lined with galleries, and is not so much inferior to it in architecture, as in length. About a mile further, advancing eastward, is the bridge of Shirafs, so denominated, because it is the road-way from Isfahan to that city; and near it is the village of Cheerestan. This city was now in its highest pitch of splendor, and esteemed the largest and most magnificent in Asia*, with six

* It is probable some cities in China exceeded it.

hundred thousand inhabitants, exclusive of those crowds, who had fled thither for shelter from different parts of the open country, and were reckoned near an hundred thousand souls.

Such was the importance of this city, which Maghmud dared to besiege with so small an army. This young prince, who was still encamped at Farabad, ordered entrenchments to be thrown up between the river and Julfa; and the same day he made himself master of this town, he commanded some squadrons to present themselves before the ramparts of Isfahan, to observe the disposition of the enemy. This detachment, supported by a considerable part of the army, began to execute their orders; but the Persians, now recovered from their first panic, gave them so warm a reception, that they were obliged to retire, with some loss.

Maghmud then marched himself in person, intending to make a general assault. The 21st of March he appeared at the head of his army, upon the banks of the Zenderoud; but finding the river overflowed, and the bridges strongly guarded, this action ended at the right, and in the center, in some random shots from their cannon, which were very ill served: the affair was more serious to the left; for the officer who commanded that attack, giving way designedly, drew the troops that guarded the bridge of Abasabad after him; upon which he faced about, and brought on an engagement, in which about 200 men on each side were slain. The Persians still continued masters of the bridge; and a retreat being sounded, the Afghan army retired to their camp, after riding and hollowing, rather than fighting, for the space of six hours.

The besieged, who saw what passed from the tops of the terrasses, with which the houses of Isfahan are covered, began to alter the opinion which they had conceived of the enemy's bravery. Their spirits were greatly raised upon reflecting, how ill this last attack had been contrived, and how weakly executed: they now looked upon the slowness of the Afghan chief in advancing after the battle of Gulnabad, and the great precaution he used in entrenching himself, as a certain sign of a timorous disposition; but they were soon obliged to fly again to the defence of their ramparts. For Maghmud being informed by his spies in the city, of the effect of his imprudent enterprize, had taken a sudden resolution to re-establish the reputation of his arms by some signal exploit.

With

With this design his army appeared in battalia the 23d of the same month, and while part of his troops were sounding the river in different parts, as if they intended to ford it, the remainder fell sword in hand upon the post which defended the bridge of Shirafs. The Afghans behaved, on this occasion, with so much resolution and bravery, that they overthrew the Persians at the very first onset. Their impetuosity carried all before them; they were already masters of the bridge, and considering the confusion into which the Persians were thrown, the rebels might have entered the town pell-mell along with them, had not Achmed Aga, a white eunuch, and a soldier of approved valour, whom the king had now deputed governor of Isfahan, come up with a body of veteran troops, and renewed the engagement. He drove the Afghans immediately back to the middle of the bridge; and while both parties were fighting there with equal obstinacy, some pieces of cannon, that were in battery upon the banks of the river, were pointed ^y at the Afghans, which cleared the bridge, and put the rebels to flight. Achmed Aga pursued them as far as their entrenchments, and made a terrible slaughter. Maghmud had been undone, if the Vali of Arabia had fallen upon him at the same time with his troops; but this prince now confirmed his treachery, in the esteem of those who were not insatuated; and sacrificed his reputation as a soldier, as well as the welfare of the state, to his sinister purposes ^z.

^y This signal piece of service was performed by one Jacob a Courlander, who from a cartwright, was made an officer of the artillery.

^z As generalissimo he had fifty tomans, or 125 l. a day, but this motive only could not have induced him to make a sacrifice of those whose pay he received.

C H A P. XIX.

Maghmud sends a deputation to Isfahan with proposals of peace, which are refused. He makes himself master of the bridge Abasabad, and invests the city. The troops marching to the relief of the besieged, are defeated. Gallant behaviour of the inhabitants of Ben Isfahan. Treacherous conduct of the Vali of Arabia. Defeat of the Khan of Cohkilan.

MAGHMUD was greatly disheartened at his disappointment in the last action; the promises of the Vali of Arabia were his chief dependence; and yet what security could he have of the fidelity of a traitor? Thus he was perplexed in what manner he should proceed. The vigorous defence made by the besieged, and the repulses he met with in his several attacks, alarmed his fears, lest his troops might become dispirited, if his next attempt should meet with no better success. He knew, however, that Isfahan was destitute of provisions, and that it must fall, if he could cut off all communication between that city and the country: but for this purpose, it was necessary for the communication of his troops, to throw a bridge over the river; or to make himself master of one of those which had been so gallantly maintained by the Persians: besides, the greatness of the circumference rendered this project extremely dangerous, as the siege could not be turned into a blockade, without giving the khans of the provinces time to assemble; and the junction of any body of forces with those in the city, must render his enterprize abortive. In order to obtain a peace, the king had some time before offered him a large sum of money, with the sovereignty of Kandahar, and consented to yield up also the province of Hassarai, but refused to grant him one of the princesses his daughters in marriage. This refusal determined Maghmud to lay siege to Isfahan, at a time when he was thinking how to secure an honourable retreat.

But now he resolved to try what he could do by negotiation, of which his enemies had set him the example. He therefore deputed one of his principal officers, with a commission to offer to raise the siege, and to agree to a peace, on condition that the king would give him one of the princesses his daughters in marriage, with a portion of fifty thousand tomans;

tomans^a; and acknowledge him as sovereign, not only of Kandahar and Kherman, which he already possessed, but likewise of the province of Khorasan, which should be yielded to him by the same treaty.

Shah Hussein was under great perturbation; but the conditions appeared very dishonourable. The manner in which the Afghans had hitherto conducted themselves, had flattered him into a belief, that the governors of the provinces, and the tributary princes would have time to march to his assistance, and there was then no reason to doubt but the enemy would be crushed; he therefore rejected these proposals.

Maghmud being informed by the return of his deputy, of the little success of his commission, prepared to obtain by famine, what he no longer expected by force of arms. This enterprize, however, was extremely delicate. The Persians had by advanced posts, made a further addition to the largeness of the circumference, insomuch that the Afghans could not divide themselves into so many bodies, as there were places to occupy, without running the risk of being beaten in separate detachments: these difficulties did not retard Maghmud who secretly renewing his engagements with the Vali of Arabia, applied all his thoughts to the execution of his project.

After he had taken this resolution, he detached different bodies of troops to ravage the district of Isfahan. This territory contained above one thousand villages, built by the orders of Abas the Great, who peopled them not only with the natives of Irac Agemi, but likewise with several families which he transported thither from other parts of the empire. The plain is very fruitful, and produces provisions sufficient to maintain both the inhabitants of the open Country, and those of the capital. The Afghans charged with this commission, took possession of some of these villages by main force, of others by cutting off the waters, and many were abandoned upon their approach; insomuch that the number of those which by an obstinate resistance had tired them out, and escaped falling into their hands, was very small. The Afghans, according to the barbarities of the east, put most of the men to the sword, and brought off great numbers of the women and children into slavery: it is said that upon making a distribution of them, five or six fell to the share of every private soldier. The Afghans then sent home the Armenian girls, that were yet left in their possession.

This expedition served not only to cut off all forage and provisions from the city, but likewise to bring great plenty into their own camp. Their magazines being thus filled, they might now invest the place without being obliged to send out detachments for provisions or forage. This was of the greater moment, as Maghmud had waited in vain for a reinforcement from Kherman and Kandahar ; however, he augmented his forces by making soldiers of many of those who had followed his army as menial servants, supplying their places with prisoners whose lives he had spared.

From the affair of the bridge of Shirafs, till the latter end of April, that is, during the whole time they were plundering the open country, Maghmud had amused the besieged with different negotiations ; but as soon as he had recruited his army, and his different detachments had joined him, he resolved to break off this kind of truce. The great object he had in view for the present, was to open a passage over the river, which a particular accident gave him a favourable opportunity of accomplishing. The head of the bridge Abasabad was covered by an entrenchment, lined with some pieces of cannon. A detachment of Georgians, to whom the defence of this bridge was entrusted, had obtained a supply of spirituous liquors : Maghmud was no sooner informed of this incident, which happened the last day of April, than he detached fifteen hundred men to attack them. The Georgians, as he had foreseen, were all stupified, or not able to stand, so that they were cut to pieces, hardly making any resistance ; and the Afghans having made themselves masters of this important post, secured the possession of it, by turning the artillery against the enemy. Part of the army filed off immediately over this bridge, and spread themselves all round the town. Guards were placed at the principal passages, and scouts ordered to march continually from one of these posts to the other, so that Isfahan was that same day entirely invested.

This success alarmed the besieged ; they had for some time made earnest application for liberty to attack the enemy ; but now their request was changed into murmurs. They loudly declared that Maghmud dreading the bravery of the Persian troops, which he had so lately experienced, was determined to avoid all occasion of fighting, and endeavoured to destroy them by famine : that to temporize on so pressing an occasion was betraying the common cause ; that it was no longer time to deliberate ; that their only resource was to march against the rebels, before hunger had destroyed

ed part of the citizens, and rendered the rest unable to make use of their arms. This generous and prudent resolution, if it had been carried into execution, would in all probability have quashed their enemies, and it really was the only expedient left. The Athemat Doulet and most of the grandees were of this opinion, and even the king thought so himself; but this unhappy prince soon changed his sentiment. The Vali of Arabia had so disguised his treacherous purposes, as to have an absolute ascendant over his weak and fluctuating mind: and tho' after what passed, this fatal advice ought in all reason to have confirmed what might otherwise be only a strong suspicion of treason, yet he easily prevailed on Houssein to temporize, in hopes of the succours which he expected.

The inhabitants of Isfahan began now to feel the dreadful effects of famine; and all their hopes seemed to vanish. The governors of the provinces looking upon themselves as able, each separately, to beat the rebels, had refused to serve under Ali Merdan Khan, Vali of Loristan, who, in conformity to the orders of the court, appeared at the head of ten thousand men at Honfar, where he expected they would join him. Cassim, Khan of the Bactiaris^b, was the first who appeared with twelve thousand horse, and advanced towards Isfahan; but as Aman Ola kept the field with a flying camp, he fell upon the Khan when he was least expected. Two thousand Bactiaris were killed in this engagement, and the rest were dispersed and put to flight.

The love which the Vali of Loristan bore to his country, gave him a quick sensibility of this misfortune; though it was an effect of the contempt shewn to his authority. This prince had been banished for some time to Kherman, by the artifice of one of his brothers, who supplanted him in his command of Vali; but as soon as he knew that the Afghans were marching towards the capital, he came to offer his services. His experience and valour, virtues so necessary in these circumstances, were so well known, that he was re-instated in his principality; and he justified this mark of confidence,

P 4

^b Bakthiar, in Persic, signifies happy. These are the Bactiaris situate west of Isfahan; the ordinary residence of whose Khan, is said to be the town of Honfar. These people inhabit the eastern parts of the deserts towards Bagdat: they live mostly in tents, and are divided into two tribes, called Chahar-ling and Esh-ling. They pretend to have embraced christianity under Constantine the great.

confidence, by the bravery with which he behaved at the battle of Gulnabad. But not satisfied with having given this mark of fidelity; he had, since the commencement of the siege, amassed a quantity of provision, and designed to force one of the posts belonging to the rebels, and to convoy it into Isfahan. He was just upon the point of making this attempt; when his brother defeated the design, by a new piece of treachery.

This wretch, who was ambitious of a dignity which he did not merit, and to which, as a younger brother, the order of birth gave him no right; took the opportunity to debauch part of his brother's troops, and to take the command himself, at a time when this prince was gone upon a journey of some days, in order to make new levies; and as he was now master of the convoy, and of a considerable number of soldiers, without waiting his brother's return with fresh forces, he joined the Khan of Hamadan, and marched with him to the relief of Isfahan, but his perfidy, tho' it might have a mixture of virtue, was attended with a signal punishment. These two chiefs had 6000 men under their command, and expected to be able to join the troops of Cohkilan upon their march; but falling in with the body of Afghans commanded by Aman Ola, within three days journey of Isfahan, they were attacked before they had time to recover their surprize; above 3000 of their men saved themselves by flight, among whom was the brother of the Vali of Loristan: yet he did not long escape the fate he seemed to deserve; for Ali Merdan Khan, provoked at an action which defeated the chief hopes of the empire, sacrificed this unnatural brother to his own resentment, and to the public vengeance.

Aman Ola having taken possession of this convoy, with all the baggage of the Persian troops, was fully sensible of the great consequence of his victory; but he stained the lustre of it by his cruelty. Part of the Persians had laid down their arms upon promise of quarter; yet he paid no regard to his word, for he saved only those from whom he expected a considerable ransom, abandoning the rest to the inhumanity of his soldiers, who killed them in cold blood.

Three miles from Isfahan, there is a town called Ben Isfahan^e, situated on the declivity of a hill, and fortified with the addition of some art, at the foot of which extends a plain, which several rivulets of running water contribute to render as fruitful as it is agreeable. After the battle of Gulnabad,

many

^e In Arabic as well as Hebrew, son of Isfahan.

many flocked thither from the neighbouring villages, so that there was a number of men capable to bear arms ; and these had been extremely active in harassing the enemy. Having now received intelligence, that the Afghans were returning to their Camp after their victory, much fatigued with the march, and without observing any order ; they attacked them with great valour, and with an eager thirst of revenging the death of their countrymen, insomuch that they put them to flight, and seized on their baggage and convoy.

Maghmud was so much provoked at this affront, which might have been attended with dangerous consequences in the present situation of his affairs ; that he instantly mounted on horse-back, and putting himself at the head of a body of cavalry, overtook the enemy as they were returning home with their booty. Fortune however favoured this prince as little as it had done his general. These peasants gave him so warm and so resolute a Reception, that after cutting part of his troops in pieces, they obliged him to turn his back, and to leave them a considerable number of prisoners, among whom were his uncle, his younger brother, and two of his cousins.

The vexation caused by this fresh disgrace, did not affect Maghmud so tenderly, as his fears for the preservation of persons whom he loved, and who were so nearly related to him. As soon as he returned to his camp, he sent an officer to Shah Hufsein, entreating him to interpose his authority in their behalf ; and this prince glad of an opportunity of doing an act of humanity, and still fondly expecting an accommodation, immediately dispatched Mirza Rahim, one of the officers of his court. The Afghans escorted this messenger as far as Ben Isfahan : he made all possible expedition, but he arrived too late ; for at his entering the town, he saw the dead bodies of the captives fixed upon stakes ; when he complained at their having acted so precipitately, in an affair of that importance, they stopped his mouth by telling him ; that barbarians who, contrary to their promise, had murdered their prisoners in cold blood, ought not to be surprized, if they should meet with such treatment in their turn, when there was no promise given. Tho' Maghmud might naturally have expected these reprisals, they flung him into a kind of frenzy. He immediately ordered all the Persians in his power to be massacred upon the spot ; and not contented with so cruel a revenge, he forbid his men to grant any quarter hereafter to the enemy. His mind was agitated for some days with the emotions of grief and revenge ; but

as soon as he recovered, and began to reflect seriously, he fell into a state of despondency. He had never flattered himself with the hopes of reducing Isfahan, but by the reputation of his arms; and when that was lost, he could hardly expect, that the Vali of Arabia would be able to prevent the besieged from taking advantage of his disgraces, by attacking him in their turn; or else, that this treacherous general, alarmed at his ill success, would cease to favour a party, which fortune seemed to have abandoned. In these embarrassing circumstances, he reinforced the guards of the bridge Abasabad, and the other posts; and leaving only a very small garrison in Julfa, he ordered the remainder of his army to return to Farabad, as if he intended to secure his retreat.

The fate of the empire was then in the king's hands. He might have easily forced some of those posts which were at too great a distance to be able to support each other; and if he had done that, or even made a feint towards it, there was reason to presume that the enemy would have abandoned their several stations; and instead of besieging, would have been besieged themselves. The Armenians of Julfa, who were accused of favouring the rebels, and yet continued always faithful to their sovereign, to whom they gave exact intelligence of every thing that was passing, signalized their zeal on this occasion. They gave notice to the court of the consternation which had spread itself throughout the camp of the Afghans; and in order to induce them to make a proper use of it, they offered to put the garrison of Julfa to the sword, as soon as they could see the king's troops engaged with the enemy, this was such a proposal as no one in their right senses could refuse to accept, for there was great probability of its succeeding; and the Afghans would then have been inevitably undone. If the bridge of Abasabad had been attacked on both sides, at one and the same time, it could never have held out; the detachments placed at the several posts, deprived of all hopes of succours, or even of a retreat, would have been forced one after another; and the remainder of the army, invested at Farabad, to all human appearance would have been reduced to the necessity of imploring the clemency of the Persians: the least benefit they could expect from such an enterprize, must have been the opening a passage for the convoy which the inhabitants of Ben-Isfahan had recovered.

These advantages were so evident, that the king could not help seeing them; and the troops received orders to act in consequence: but the Vali of Arabia their commander, preserved

preserved the Afghans from this danger. This prince judging that his treacherous conduct would be discovered, if the enemy raised the siege, marched out of the town, but with a full resolution not to fight. He evaded coming to action for some days, under pretence that he waited for a body of troops, which, according to the advices he had received, was set out from one of the provinces, and could not be long upon their march; and having by this delay cooled the king's ardour in regard to his project, and given Maghmud time to provide for his security, he brought his army back into the city; alledging, that as the succours did not come, he did not think it prudent to hazard an action, which was to decide the fate of the empire, upon the promise of so suspected a people as the Armenians of Julfa. This step saved Maghmud, and a new event soon revived his hopes. The Khan of Cohkilan, being ignorant of the defeat of the troops which were to join him, was in full march towards the capital, when he was attacked, as the others were before him, at a time he did not imagine the enemy so near; and after losing two thousand men in the engagement, he made the best of his way back to his province with eight thousand men.

C H A P. XX.

Shah Hufsein applies in vain to the Vali of Georgia for assistance. He declares his son Tæhmas Myrza his successor. Tæhmas escapes from Isfahan, and endeavours to raise an army to march to the assistance of his father. Famine in Isfahan. Achmed Aga makes a vigorous sally to open a passage for a convoy of provisions, but is defeated by the treachery of the Vali of Arabia. Death of Achmed Aga.

THE affliction which this news caused in Isfahan, was increased by another piece of intelligence, received soon after it. The king depended upon the Georgians as his deliverers; the valour of those people was equally known to the Persians, and the rebels; and there was no reason to doubt, but the enemy would raise the siege, upon the first notice of their march. From this persuasion, Shah Hufsein wrote in the most pressing terms to their prince, immediately after the battle of Gulnabad; but the proud Vachtanga, not being yet able to overcome the mortification which this monarch had given him, by preventing his revenge on the Lef-
gees,

gees, adhered to the rash oath he had made on that occasion, and by his present refusal to fight, sacrificed the whole empire.

As soon as it was known, that no assistance could be expected from the Georgians; the apprehensions, which the inexperience of the rebels, and the advantages obtained over them, had in some measure suspended, revived with greater force. All hopes of success were now banished; and the minds of the people were intirely filled with the ideas of their past misfortunes, and those with which they were yet threatened. It was notorious, that the governors of the provinces were fully resolved not to submit to the authority of the Vali of Loristan; and the defeat of the Khans of the Bactiarians, of Hamadan, and Cohkilan, was a proof that no good was to be expected, so long as they refused to unite under the same commander.

As the danger increased every day, the king thought it high time to enter into some measures, to prevent the whole royal family from being involved in one common ruin. This monarch had fourteen sons, and four daughters. Three days after the battle of Gulnabad, he had declared Abas Myrza the eldest, his successor to the throne, and resigned the care of the government into his hands. This young prince being of a very warm temper, and disdaining to dissimulate, began his administration with ordering the Vali of Arabia, the first physician, and some other persons of figure, to be put to death: however, they contrived to ward off the blow, by obtaining of the king to shut him up again in the seraglio; where, according to the policy of the state, he had been hitherto confined with his brothers. Sessie Myrza, who followed him in order of birth, was substituted in his stead, but did not succeed better; for the courtiers judging him too weak to govern, about a month after he underwent the same fate. The third brother was not chosen, because the too scrupulous attachment which he professed to the duties of religion, seemed to disqualify him for such an office; so that Tæhmas^d Myrza, who was next to him in order of birth, was acknowledged towards the end of May, presumptive heir of the crown.

The latter end of June, the king resolved to send this young prince out of Isfahan. The desire of securing in his person, a legitimate successor, was not the only motive, which induced him to take this resolution; he was also willing

^d This prince's right name is Tæmasheb, which in the antient Persian language signifies most pure.

ling by this means, to deprive his generals of all pretence of disobedience, hoping that the difficulty they made to unite the forces of their respective governments, would no longer subsist, as soon as they had orders to assemble under the command of the presumptive heir of the crown. Aman Ola, who had been sent with some forces to attack the troops, which were marching to the relief of Isfahan, was not yet returned, and his absence weakened the main army of the Afghans; insomuch that they could hardly supply forces sufficient to guard the different posts, which shut up the several avenues to the town.

Tæhmas Myrza being determined to follow the directions of the king his father, set out from Isfahan the 21st of June in the night, escorted by three hundred chosen horse. Mahomed Emir, surnamed Ashreff^e Sultan, son of Mir Abdallah, whom Maghmud had deprived of his throne and life in Kandahar, commanded the post which intercepted the communication between the town and the country, on the side of the gate Tokchi. Maghmud's mother was extremely fond of this young lord, and had by her intreaties saved him more than once from the cruelty of her son. Ashreff dissembled the aversion he had conceived against the murderer of his father; and behaved with so much prudence and valour on every occasion, at the same time giving such demonstrations of zeal for the interest of his chief, that at length he gained his confidence, as well as the esteem of the whole army.

This post was the best guarded, as it was by the Tokchi-gate the city could most conveniently receive succours. Tæhmas intended to surprize it, and to force his way through, in order to retire to Casbin. He advanced by the favour of the night; but could not escape the vigilance of the enemy, whom he found under arms, and ready to oppose him. Tho' the Afghans were inferior in number to the troops of Tæhmas Myrza, yet the engagement continued very obstinate and bloody, till Ashreff, after losing a great part of his men, was obliged to retire to a neighbouring fort, to save the remainder of his people from the fury of the Persians.

This event filled the besieged with hopes: they flattered themselves that the presence of the prince would raise compassion in every breast; and that he would soon be in a condition to rescue them from the miseries in which they were involved. The Afghans on the contrary were in great consternation

^e Ashreff signifies most noble.

sternation to hear that the heir of the diadem had escaped, and might soon return at the head of an army. Maghmud in particular fell into a transport of rage; the captivity of the whole royal family being the greatest advantage he had to expect from the taking of Isfahan. He was heard to say in the vehemence of his wrath, "that it would be to little purpose now to reduce the capital, since there would be still a prince able to dispute the throne with him." His passion prevailed over his reason so much, that though Ashreff had behaved so gallantly, he accused him of holding a correspondence with the enemy; and condemned him to death.

So passionate and unjust a sentence however did not take place. Ashreff appeared before an assembly of the principal officers of the army, to vindicate his innocence; he represented to them, that the post which he had guarded, was, like several others, weakened by the detachment made from the army under Aman Ola, and consisted only of one hundred men when Tæhmas appeared: that this prince was at the head of a much more numerous body of troops, exceedingly well mounted, and composed of several persons of distinction of the bravest soldiers about the court: that notwithstanding these circumstances, he went out of his entrenchments to meet the prince; but so small a number of soldiers as he had under his command, however gallantly they might behave, could not hinder the Persians from forcing their way sword in hand; and that, as a proof of his vigilance, thirty of his men were killed on the occasion. There is little room to imagine that Ashreff was false to his trust; for Maghmud having neither children nor brother of a proper age to succeed him, this young lord might be considered as his heir. The divan pronounced in his favour; and Maghmud, disguising his suspicions, restored Ashreff to his employments.

During this transaction in the camp of the rebels, Tæhmas Myrza, after a forced march of twenty-four hours, reach'd Cashan, he then proceeded to Koom, and from thence to Casbin. This young prince had so great a sensibility of the danger, in which he had left the king his father, that he spared no pains to compass his delivery: but private interest, and the spirit of independency, intirely baffled an authority which had no force to support it; so that neither his orders nor entreaties prevailed. The greatest part of the people in the neighbourhood of Isfahan, had been dispersed through fear; and want of resolution now hindered them from uniting. Besides those bodies already mentioned, which found pretences to avoid coming to the assistance of the capital; the troops

troops of Ganja excused themselves, alledging they were occupied in opposing the incursions of the Lesgees, who were endeavouring to take advantage of the troubles. The forces in Tavis had mutinied against their Khan, lately sent them from court, and consequently refused to obey the orders of the prince: thus the king hardly received any assistance from near 50,000 regular troops, which were quartered on those frontiers ^f.

The feudatory princes of the empire, being less interested than the natural subjects, in the preservation of the monarchy, shewed as little zeal on this occasion; and many considered the extremity to which their sovereign was reduced, as a proper opportunity to recover their independency. The Vali of Loristan, who kept still in the neighbourhood of Honzar, seeing the impossibility of assembling an army, marched back with his troops into his own country.

The only hopes which Tæhmas had now left, was to find more submission in the Shah Seven ^g. Tæhmas having summoned this militia, most of those lords pretended they were not obliged to march, unless the king commanded in person; and the small number furnished by the rest, consisted only of peasants ill kept and ill paid; who, conceiving a dislike to military service, from the fatigues of their march, soon disbanded, and returned to their home, before they had reached the general rendezvous.

In the mean while, the scarcity of provisions increased, and the besieged became desperate. The grandees, as well as the common People, plainly saw that the only way to open a passage for a convoy of provisions, was to attack the posts of the enemy. The king, yet incapable of supporting any resolution

^f Shah Suliman, the predecessor and father of Hussein, maintained 130,000 men on the frontiers, without reckoning his household troops, which were 14000 men.

^g The well affectioned to the king; this is a name they give to a militia, very little different from that of the Zaims and Infariots in Turkey. It was established by Abas the Great, and consisted of persons chosen among the nobility, to whom he gave lands, on condition of their leading a certain number of their vassals into the field, when the sovereign should have occasion for them. This body which amounted at that time to 300,000 men, was the last resort in any extremity or sudden danger; but as these employments were hereditary, and, under the late reigns, very little care had been taken to oblige the holders of these possessions to discharge their duty, they no longer looked upon them in any other light, than as legal estates. Of this a very melancholy experiment was made on the present occasion.

resolution of himself, referred those who came to him to the Vali of Arabia. This general flattered them with the hopes of the prince's return; and when their importunities obliged him to march out of the town, he came back immediately without making any attempt, under the idle pretext, that his astrologers declared that the hour was not favourable. Whether the besieged saw into his artifices, or the fear of starving prevailed over their obedience, they grew tired of these evasions; and in the beginning of July assembled in a tumultuous manner, demanding with loud cries that Shah Husein should come forth, and lead them against the enemy.

This prince, who had been so cowardly as to shut himself up in the seraglio since the beginning of the siege, was far from yielding to such a proposal. He ordered some of his officers to let them know, that he would give his answer the next day; but the populace insisting that he should appear himself, the eunuchs dispersed them by firing some musquet shots from the palace. So extraordinary a behaviour, under such circumstances, might have occasioned a general insurrection, if Achmed Aga, governor of Isfahan, had not prevented the ill consequences of it. This gallant eunuch put himself at the head of a body of veteran troops, and joining as many of the people as offered themselves, he marched out of the town at the head of near thirty thousand men, who were soon followed by the Vali of Arabia and his Arabs.

As soon as they got out of the gates, they fell with great impetuosity on one of the principal posts belonging to the enemy; the troops which guarded it were obliged to give way to numbers; and tho' part of the rebel Army came immediately to their assistance, yet Achmed Aga would have maintained his ground, if the Vali had not deserted him. Achmed, provoked at so infamous a behaviour, could not dissemble his resentment. He ordered his men to fire on the Arabians; and at the same time gave directions to Tæhmas Khan, one of his principal officers, to attack them. This division flung the troops into disorder; which the Afghans perceiving, charged them with new vigour, so that the Persians being almost hemmed in, were obliged at length to abandon the post, and retire under their ramparts.

The intent of this sally was to open a passage for the convoy abovementioned, which in all probability would have been followed with the raising of the siege. Achmed, who had formed the project, spared no pains to render it successful; but neither his valour nor conduct could screen him
from

from the displeasure of the king, who seemed to have so little discernment, as to shew no resentment against any but those who were faithful to him. This monarch was so infatuated by the artful discourse of the Vali of Arabia, as to impute the misfortune intirely to Achmed Aga: he blamed him openly for fighting in compliance with the importunity of the people, and without orders from the general: but above all, he condemned him for firing upon the Arabians: and refusing to give ear to what he had to alledge in proof of his innocence, much less to give him an opportunity of proving the perfidy of the Arabian prince, he took the government of the city from him. The faithful Achmed could not survive this disgrace, together with the approaching ruin of his country. Whether he took poison the night following, or grief overwhelmed him, he died a few days after; and the king too late regretted the loss of a man, whose distinguished zeal, bravery, and experience, might have saved his diadem,

C H A P. XXI.

Consternation in Isfahan. Treachery of Meluck Maghmud governor of Segestan, who makes himself master of Khorasan. Description of the famine in Isfahan. Capitulation for the surrender of that city. Ceremony of Shah Hussein's abdication. Mir Maghmud receives the diadem, and takes possession of Isfahan.

THE death of Achmed caused as much joy in the camp of the Afghans, as consternation in Isfahan. All hopes of succours were now vanished; and, to complete their misery, even the flesh of horses and other beasts of burthen was become very scarce. The besieged, thus pressed by famine, deserted in crowds; and tho' the Afghans massacred every Persian who fell into their hands, the desertion augmented^h. Whether Achmed Aga had been the instrument of opening the eyes of the King, in regard to the Vali

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of

^h About this time, father Krusinski, the author of the memoirs, from whence part of this history is compiled, obtained leave to remove to Julfa. Two missionaries, of the same order, attempted to make their escape to Shiraz, with the French consul: one of these fathers was killed, with some other Europeans. The consul was wounded on this occasion; however he escaped, with several others of his little troop.

of Arabia, or this monarch made an effort to change his fortune, by changing his general; he offered the command of the troops to Lutf Ali Khan. This employment could not fall into better hands, if the choice had been made sooner; but things were reduced to the last extremity, most of the inhabitants having deserted in the manner related. A great number had perished for want, and the remainder, emaciated with hunger, had neither strength nor courage to make any desperate attempt; so that this lord not daring to rely upon them, and fearing if any mischance should happen, he should fall a victim to those secret artifices which had destroyed his brother-in-law the Athemat Doulet, constantly refused every offer of that kind.

The Vali of Arabia was therefore left to carry on his treasonable practices; but Shah Hussein expecting no longer any succours from abroad, and despairing of the success of any attempt of his people within the walls, resolved to renew the negotiation, which the enemy had opened at the beginning of the siege. He sent the Kurshi Bashti to Farabad, with orders to offer Maghmud the terms he had demanded; which were to give him one of the princesses his daughters in marriage, with 50,000 tomans, and to yield to him the provinces of Khorasan, Khorman, and Kandahar, in full sovereignty. How advantageous soever these proposals appeared, Maghmud was too well acquainted with the situation of affairs, and rejected them with the same air of pride and disdain, as Alexander once affected on a like occasion; the Afghan prince answered almost in the same terms as the Grecian hero: "The king of Persia," said he, "offers me nothing that is in his disposal; this prince, and the princesses are already in my power; he is no longer master of those three provinces, which he offers me; the fate of the whole empire is now to be decided between us."

Things were thus situated, when news came that Meluck Maghmud, governor of Segestan, was advancing by forced marches to the relief of the capital. The king, touched to the heart at the arrogance of the Afghan chief, imagined that heaven had stirred up an avenger of his cause. These deluding hopes were augmented, when he heard that this general, with 10,000 men under his command, was encamped at Gulnabad. This event flung the rebel chief once more into great inquietude. The siege had already cost him above 2000 men; and he could not pretend to be a match for this army, which was composed of regular troops, and for the

forces

forces within the gates, who would certainly make some desperate effort to relieve themselves. Under this anxiety, he thought it more adviseable to tempt the fidelity of his new enemy, than to expose himself to the hazard of an engagement with an officer, whose valour and military skill he had already experienced.

Nazr Ulla was therefore appointed to repair to Gulnabad, with such magnificent presents ^k, as rather betrayed the fear, than expressed the liberality of the donor. Nazr Ulla executed his commission like a man of abilities: he represented to Meluck Maghmud, that the capital was reduced to the last extremity, and that the rest of the empire being attacked on every side, could not avoid its approaching ruin: he made him sensible of the uncertainty of the issue of a battle, and that the friendship of Mir Maghmud might, in the present circumstances, procure him advantages far superior to his present expectations: he then laid before him the articles of his commission, and offered him the alliance and assistance of the Afghans, if he inclined to accept the sovereignty of one of the provinces of the kingdom.

The magnificence of the presents had already dazzled the eyes of Meluck Maghmud; the uncertainty of the issue of a battle also staggered him; but the ambition of reigning determined his compliance. He made Khorasan his choice, with a view of being supported in case of need by the provinces of Kandahar and Herat, which their common interest gave him sufficient reason to expect. Having therefore concluded the treaty, he set out on his march to take possession of his new dominions.

Mesched, the capital of that country, which the policy of Abas the Great had raised to so flourishing a condition, was greatly fallen from its former lustre. The Abdolles and Ousbegs, who made incursions in this neighbourhood, at length took it by storm, after a few days siege; and not satisfied with stripping it of the wealth which had been hoarded there by the superstition of the Persians, the inhabitants felt the utmost effects of avarice and cruelty. Ismael Khan, governor of the province, unable to oppose Meluck Maghmud, took the resolution of retiring to Casbin. Whether the Abdolles and Ousbegs had no further view than to pillage, and consequently had abandoned their conquest; or whether the thing was concerted with the Afghan prince, the new usurper was received in Mesched the 20th of November, and the other

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cities

^k Seven horses magnificently caparisoned, saddles, bridles, a poinard enriched with diamonds, rich stuffs, and gold callyans.

cities of the province knowing he was a Schias, made no difficulty to acknowledge him for their sovereign.

The joy which the approach of this general had occasioned in Isfahan, served only to heighten the forlorn condition to which they were reduced. The exorbitant pay of the military people, had exhausted the Shah's treasure; so that the next expedient was to carry all the gold and silver plate in the palace, to the mint; and when this was all gone, the king borrowed considerable sums on his jewels, of different merchants, but especially of the English and Dutch¹. At length, the latter end of September, when there was neither money nor provisions left, this unfortunate prince ordered his ministers to go and treat for a capitulation.

Maghmud might at this time have regulated the conditions as he pleased; but this dangerous rebel had further views. He foresaw that he could never be safe in Isfahan, so long as the inhabitants were greatly superior in number to his troops; for which reason he took his measures, that a considerable part of those who remained, might perish with hunger, before he signed the treaty. It is true, he might have destroyed them at once, by ordering a general assault, which, in their miserable condition, would have been the least act of cruelty; his chief officers pressed him to this for some time, giving for reason, that this action would not only facilitate the conquest of the rest of the empire, by the terror which it would spread in all parts; but moreover, that it would justify his invasion, since according to the law, there is no better title to a crown, than taking it by the sword. Whether he was afraid of losing part of his best troops, or intended to preserve from the greedy hands of his soldiers, the great riches of this so late flourishing city, he lay still within his lines, during the last two months of the siege, amusing himself with the idea of his future grandeur; whilst the besieged flattered themselves with the hopes of an accommodation, which he never intended.

What heart can reflect without horror, on the dreadful circumstances of the famine, caused by this artful conduct! In the month of August, horses, mules, and other beasts of burthen, were become so excessive dear, that none but the king, and the principal lords about him, or some of the wealthiest inhabitants, could afford to eat of them. Notwithstanding the aversion which the Persians have from their religion for dogs, and some other animals, which they look upon as unclean, yet as many as they could find, were consumed

¹ The Dutch alone lent him 340,000 crowns.

sumed in a few days: the people afterwards fed on the bark of trees, leaves, and leather, which they softened with boiling water; but when this sad resource was also exhausted, they had no other support than human flesh. Never was so much of it eaten in any siege as this. What pencil can describe their hollow eyes, their trembling knees, their emaciated bodies! Death, in his ghastly form, appeared in their livid countenances, whilst they were cutting slices of human bodies to support the feeble remains of life: some were even transported by the violence of hunger, to murder their fellow-citizens, or young children, to feast on their bodies. Under this lamentable necessity of perishing by famine, or of supporting themselves by means so contrary to nature, several poisoned themselves together with their whole family. The streets, the publick squares, and the very gardens of the palace, were strewed with dead bodies, which no one had the heart or strength to bury. The water of the Zenderoud was so corrupted by the number of carcases thrown into it, that there was no possibility of drinking of it; and in a less wholesome climate^m, the air must have been infected to that degree, as to destroy what few inhabitants were left alive. Such was the miserable situation of this unhappy city for above two months. The Armenians were received in Julfa, excepting such as had carried provisions to the enemy, contrary to the prohibition of Maghmud; but if any of the Persians were so desperate as to go thither, they were sure to meet with death: neither age nor sex could protect them from the barbarity of the Afghans; the men were massacred, and the women and children thrown into wells.

The 21st of October, Shah Husein, clad in mourning, went out of his palace on foot, and walked thro' the principal streets of Isfahan. This unfortunate monarch bewailed aloud the misfortunes of his reign, imputing them to the bad counsels of his ministers; he endeavoured also to comfort the multitude that surrounded him, with the hopes of their meeting with a better fate, under a new government. This speech from a prince, whose gentleness of nature was the fault which had ever betrayed him, and by which he was now reduced to this state of humiliation, after a reign of eight and twenty years, could not but make a sensible impression on the people, who in spite of their own misery, in

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the

^m The air of Isfahan is remarkably rarified; it resembles much that of Madrid, as I was assured by a Jesuit, who lived many years in both cities.

the bitterness of their souls lamented the disgrace of their sovereign.

The king having thus taken his leave of his subjects the 22d of October, sent plenipotentiaries the day following, to sign the capitulation. By this act, he obliged himself to resign the empire to the conqueror, and to yield himself up into his hands, with the principal officers of his court. Maghmud on the other side, promised that no ill treatment should be offered, neither to the king, the nobility, nor any of the inhabitants. This treaty being signed, the day following ^a Maghmud sent horses for the king and his court : this unfortunate prince having sacrificed five camels ^o, perhaps the only ones left, mounted on horse-back, in company with about three hundred persons, among whom were the Vali of Arabia, the Athemat Doulet, a brother of the Vali of Loristan, and the principal lords of the court ; they moved on slowly, with their eyes fixed on the ground ; the few inhabitants who had strength to see this mournful cavalcade, expressed their grief by a gloomy silence, which presaged the sad effects of this melancholy event.

It was now past noon, when two couriers arrived, to give notice to the grand master of the ceremonies of Maghmud's court, that the king was drawing near. These officers immediately entered Maghmud's tent, who to humble the Persians still more, dispatched the same couriers back, with orders to the Shah, to halt at the foot of a hill near the camp, under the pretence that Maghmud was asleep. Thus the unhappy Hussein was treated with marks of servitude, even before he had quitted the ensigns of royalty ; he tarried about half an hour at the place prescribed, and then obtaining leave to continue his march, he arrived at Farabad, where the Afghan chief had his head quarters.

The grand master of the ceremonies introduced him into a hall, at the corner ^p of which Maghmud was seated, leaning on a cushion of cloth of gold. The king advancing to-

wards

^a The 23d of October 1722, was the day on which this catastrophe happened.

^o They were killed without any ceremony ; I do not know for what purpose this sacrifice was ordered ; that of one camel, which seems to be prescribed by the law, should have been made at Mecca, the 10th of the preceding moon.

^p The corner is the most honourable place in Oriental countries. It is also the most commodious, and it is the only one in which a person can lean on both sides on the cushions, which are placed round the walls.

wards the middle of the chamber, saluted him, saying, *Se-lam Aleiocom*⁹. The Afghan then rose up, and returned the salute, with the same compliment; after which, the Athemat Doulet conducted the king to another corner, on the left of Maghmud, where a place was prepared for him, like that which was occupied by this rebel prince.

The king being seated, opened the conversation by saying: "Son, since the great sovereign of the world is no longer pleased that I should reign, and the moment is come which he has pointed out for thee to ascend the throne of Persia, I resign the empire to thee with all my heart: I wish that thou mayst rule it in all prosperity." At the same time he took the royal plume of feathers^r from his turbant, and gave it to Maghmud's grand visier; but this prince refusing to receive it from the visier, the king stood up, and taking it again, fastened it himself to the usurper's turbant, saying, "reign in peace;" after which he retired, and sat down in his place. Maghmud continued sitting, while Hussein was fixing this mark of sovereignty on his turbant. Coffee and tea were afterwards served up; and the Afghan prince, taking these liquors, addressed himself to the king after this manner: "Such is the instability of human grandeur: God disposes of empires as he pleases, and takes them from one nation to give them to another: but I promise to consider you always as my own father; and I will undertake nothing for the future without your advice." After these words, Hussein was invited into another apartment, which had been appointed for him; and 4000 Afghans were ordered to take possession of the royal palace, and of the gates of the city.

Thus the reign of the Seffies, after having lasted 223 years, ended at length in the person of Shah Hussein^s, the tenth successor of Ismael the first king, and founder of this dynasty.

⁹ All hail: this compliment is seldom given but to people of the same persuasion in religion; it is the highest expression of respect.

^r This plume of feathers is called the Giga, and is the mark of sovereignty.

^s We may with propriety say it ended, since his son Tahmas was too weak or too unfortunate to re-establish it.

P A R T VI.

THE

REVOLUTIONS of PERSIA,

FROM THE

ACCESSION of MAGHMUD

TO THE

Crown of PERSIA, in 1722,

TO THE

Treaty concluded between SHAH TÆHMAS

AND

PETER the GREAT in 1723.

C H A P. XXII.

Ashreff quits Maghmud's army. Maghmud ascends the throne, and receives the homage of Shah Hussein, and the grandees of Persia. He regulates the civil administration. Tæhmas Myrza takes the title of king. Maghmud orders new levies to be raised in Kandahar. He sends Nazr Ulla, with a detachment of troops, to lay siege to Casbin. Tæhmas retires upon the approach of the Afghan army. Casbin surrenders.

THE tranquility of the new reign was disturbed by a sudden event. Ashreff Sultan had not forgot the danger to which the escape of Tæhmas Myrza had exposed him; but continued apprehensive lest that very protection which had saved him, should be imputed to him as a new crime, by a prince who was upon the point of being absolute master. As soon therefore as this Afghan prince received notice

notice that the Shah Hussein had submitted, he deserted his post, designing to retreat to Kandahar, under an escort of an hundred chosen horse. Maghmud, sensible of the consequence of such a desertion, sent Nazr Ulla in pursuit of him with five hundred horse: this general made such haste, that he overtook him at Versene, a village twenty leagues distant, from whence he brought him back to the camp. Maghmud had meditated his destruction, but he escaped the second time. He was really more beloved by the soldiers, than Maghmud himself, and they talked openly of retiring to Kandahar, if any attempt should be made to take away his life. Maghmud thought it best to forgive him, at least to dissemble his resentment.

His thoughts were now employed in regard to the ceremony of ascending the throne, which had been just resigned to him. The 27th of the same month, was the day appointed for this solemnity. Aman Ola posted centinels on the turrets, and other lofty edifices, to observe the motions of the people. The two kings marched out of the camp of the Afghans, and advanced towards the town. Maghmud, in order to shew himself to his new subjects, took his rout by the bridge of Shiras, so that he traversed the city to reach the palace.

The procession was opened by ten officers on horse-back, and about 2000 cavalry, among whom were several lords of the court of Persia. Next came the master of the horse to the Afghan prince, at the head of fifteen led horses magnificently caparisoned; he was followed by some musqueteers on foot, and these by 1000 common infantry. Immediately after came the grand master of the ceremonies, in the midst of 300 negroes dressed in scarlet cloth. These negroes had been chosen from among the slaves of Isfahan, to compose the conqueror's guard. Forty paces from thence was Maghmud, mounted on a horse^t, of which the Vali of Arabia had made him a present, on the day of the abdication. The unfortunate Hussein rode on his left side. These princes were followed by about 300 pages on horse-back. The Musti^u, and Aman Ola^w, whom Maghmud had appointed his grand visier; Mullah Saffran^x, and Nazr Ulla^y, one of his

^t It is said that this horse cost 4000 crowns.

^u The judge who decides on points of law.

^w He is also called Aman Ola Khan, tho' his title of Khan has not been observed.

^x This was Maghmud's chief ecclesiastic.

^y Nazr Ulla was also denominated Nazr Ulla Sultan;

his generals; Moula Moussa his high treasurer, and Mahommed Aga steward of his household, succeeded next; after these came the Athemat Doulet, and the principal officers of the dethroned monarch, mixed with the crowd of Afghan officers. The whole was closed by 100 camels, each loaded with one of the harquebuses already mentioned, preceded by 600 musicians, and followed by near 6000 horse.

As soon as they had passed over the bridge of Shirass, Shah Hussein was conducted cross the gardens of the palace, to the place of his confinement. Maghmud seemed to think it impolitic to lead the conquer'd king in triumph, but continued his march, and soon arrived at the gates of the town. The inhabitants, notwithstanding their grief, felt a relief from their misery, in this change, in hopes of supporting their lives; which induced them to give some external marks of respect to their new master. They laid rich stuffs under his horses feet, and filled the air with perfumes. The guns on the camels backs were often fired, as they marched along; and in the intervals, the ten Afghans who walked at the head of the procession, pronounced loud imprecations against the followers of Ali.

In this order the new monarch came to the royal palace²; having seated himself on the throne, he was saluted the second time, as king of Persia, by the captive Hussein, who was brought here for that purpose; after which he received the oath of allegiance, of the princes, ministers, grandees, chief officers, and principal citizens. Soon after, the artillery of the town and citadel proclaimed the news to the people; and the ceremony concluded with an entertainment, which the Sultan², for so he was afterwards called, gave to the deputies who came in the name of all the citizens, to acknowledge his authority.

Notwithstanding this great change of fortune, Maghmud did not forget himself; for it may be truly said, that in the beginning he ruled like a prince born to the throne. As the most pressing business was now to put a stop to the dreadful famine, which was still consuming the few inhabitants, he gave proper orders for a supply of provisions; these were so punctually obeyed, that the very day he made his entrance,
a batman

² Devlet Kane, the habitation of greatness.

² Shah Hussein was also called Sultan, which seemed to be an additional mark of honour, but Shah is the proper title of the Persian kings. This prince was frequently stiled Shah Sultan Hussein, a writing which I have adopted.

a batman^b of bread cost only one crown, which the day before was hardly to be had at any price. He then applied himself to the regulation of public affairs, in which he displayed the abilities of a consummate statesman. It was equally dangerous to commit the several subordinate branches of the administration to his own officers; or to continue them in the hands of the ministers of the late sovereign; for he could no more expect experience from the one, than fidelity from the other. Maghmud was sensible of this inconvenience; he therefore confirmed the Persians in their employments, but associated with each of them a colleague of his own nation.

By this piece of policy, he not only formed ministers to his liking, but likewise prevented the jealousy and aversion, which his new subjects would have conceived, from his discarding the old ministry. He left no other post than that of Divan Beghi, entirely to an Afghan; presuming that good sense and equity, were sufficient for the discharge of the duties of this office. Whatever was his motive, he had no reason to repent of his choice; for the Persians themselves were soon astonished, to see justice administered with more rectitude and integrity by a foreign nation, than it had been during the reign of their natural sovereign. The people were screened from violence by the severest prohibitions; and the safety of the conquerors was provided for by the strictest discipline. So prudent a conduct, insensibly diminished the consternation of the inhabitants, which was at length entirely removed, by punishing the treason of those who had been instrumental to his conquest, verifying that common observation, that we hate the traitor, tho' the treason may be convenient.

Maghmud ordered all those to be arrested, who, contrary to the allegiance due to their sovereign, had maintained a correspondence with the Afghans during the siege. They were all executed as guilty of high treason; their memory was branded with infamy; their estates were confiscated, and their bodies exposed in the public market place. The Vali of Arabia, though the most criminal, was the only one who was not put to death. It was imagined, that Maghmud had made an oath never to take away his life; but perhaps he was

^b 12 $\frac{2}{3}$ pounds English for five shillings.

^c This might well be under such a reign as that of Hussein, for it might be emphatically said of it, "Woe be to thee, O land, whose king is a child, and whose princes eat in the morning."

was afraid of provoking the Arabs by the death of their chief; however his villainy did not escape with impunity, for Maghmud confiscated his estate, and condemned him to perpetual imprisonment. His hereditary principality, which was that of Chufistan^d, was given to one of his cousin-germans, who had served in the rebel army; and Maghmud engaged to put him in possession of it, as soon as the situation of his affairs would permit. The manner in which he behaved to the late Athemat Doulet, was not less agreeable to the Persians. This minister had the courage to put a restriction on the oath of allegiance, which he swore to the new sovereign, by begging to be excused from ever bearing arms against prince Tæhmas. Maghmud carried his policy on this occasion so far, as publicly to commend the generous behaviour of that minister; and even affected to shew him a particular esteem and confidence on that very account.

The Persians were not the only people who had reason to commend the beginning of the new reign; the consuls of European nations were confirmed in their privileges; and the missionaries obtained the free exercise of their religion in their churches in Isfahan and Julfa. Such appearances of equity in a prince, who had been hitherto considered only as a chief of banditti, drew part of the inhabitants to town, who had fled for shelter to the country. Shah Hussein was almost the only person in the empire, who had any occasion to complain. Maghmud took from him a great number of young women slaves, who composed his harram, and distributed them among his principal officers. This monarch had carried his sensuality to such a height, as to render all his subjects tributary to his pleasures; the influence of his eunuchs, which was the ruin of the empire, arose from his boundless gratifications. However, he was now reduced to the company of five of his women, and five domestics. The princes of the blood were shut up in another quarter of the palace, and guarded in the same manner as himself, by a hundred men. Maghmud, to all appearance, acted thus from a spirit of oeconomy; for in other respects he shewed a great regard for this prince, consulting him on every occasion, and omitting nothing in his power that might sooth his misfortunes. Shah Hussein, before his abdication, had married
one

^d Is the antient Susiana. The Arabs call this province after the name of its capital Ahouas. It borders upon the Persian gulph, and the banks of the Euphrates.

one of his daughters to the Sedr^e: the new sultan followed this example, and gave away the eldest of the remaining princesses in marriage to his Musti; and was married himself to the youngest with great solemnity. This respectful behaviour, joined to the necessity of obeying, induced the de-throned monarch at length to write a circular letter, by which he ratified his abdication, and enjoined all the inhabitants, both in town and country, to acknowledge the victor's authority.

During these transactions, Tæhmas Myrza, who was at Casbin, having heard of the surrender of Isfahan, and the cession of the crown, took the title of Shah, and was acknowledged as such by the provinces that continued true to their allegiance. This step served as a pretext to gratify the avarice of Maghmud; for he no sooner heard of it, than he demanded 120,000 tomans ^f of the city, to defray the expences of the war. At the same time he laid a tax of 20,000 tomans ^g on the king's first physician: this man had been for a long time his master's chief favourite, and was justly charged with having made no other use of his credit, than to hoard up immense riches, and to destroy the prime minister Fatey Ali Khan, by an artifice, which occasioned, as we have related, the total subversion of the state. As these circumstances had rendered him odious to his nation, the Afghans made no scruple of treating him with the utmost rigour. His treasure, and the sum which Isfahan was obliged to raise, having been carried to the prince's coffers, the great treasurer, Moula Moussa, received orders to repair to Kandhar, and to employ these sums in making new levies: accordingly he set out soon after. Maghmud hearing that Casbin was one of those cities which had acknowledged prince Tæhmas, he turned his thoughts that way. It is pretended that his design was to yield this city and its dependencies in full sovereignty to Aman Ola, as an equivalent for the throne and treasures of Shah Hussein; which, according to their original compact, he ought to have shared with him. Maghmud now entrusted this general with a detachment of 6000 Afghans, and 4000 foreign troops; Ashreff and Nazr Ulla having joined this little army, they marched from Isfahan towards the end of November.

Tæhmas, presuming that the Afghans would not open the campaign at the latter end of Autumn, when the weather

^e Sedr Al Scheriah, chief justice. The Turks call this officer Musti, and the Afghans, Miangi.

^f 300,000 l.

^g 50,000 l.

ther is pretty severe in those parts, had, by the advice of his prime minister, put his troops into quarters: he was therefore in no capacity of making head against the enemy. As soon as he heard of their approach, he withdrew to Zengan, and from thence to Tavis, but in no circumstances suitable to the dignity of a sovereign. The cities of Cashan, Koom, and Kiare, which lay in the direct road, sent deputies to meet Aman Ola, and to ransom themselves from pillage. This general encamped the 20th of December within three leagues of Casbin. As soon as the inhabitants knew that the Afghans were arrived within their district, they sent deputies to meet them. Aman Ola was conducted into the city with the sound of drums, and other military instruments. He took up his quarters, with great part of his army, in the palace^b, whilst the rest of the troops were lodged in the houses of the citizens.

The joy which this news occasioned at Maghmud's court, was allayed by another piece of intelligence, which came soon after. Moula Moussa, who was commissioned to convoy the treasure to Kandahar, had entered the province of Segestan without any opposition; but Myrza Ismael, governor of Banda^c, having attacked him on his march, Moussa and his convoy were put to flight, and obliged to abandon the treasure. It is affirmed that the money amounted to 150,000 tomans^d.

C H A P. XXIII.

Peter the Great invades the northern provinces of Persia. Operations of the Russian army. Persia threatened by the Turks. The inhabitants of Casbin take up arms, and drive away the Afghans. Artful behaviour of Maghmud upon that occasion.

MAGHMUD was not the only formidable enemy, that appeared in arms against the crown of Persia. Peter the Great being convinced that commerce is the only source of riches, and consequently the basis of the splendor of a state, designed to open a communication between the Caspian and Euxine seas, by joining the Volga and the Don^e;
as

^b See Vol. I. chap. xxxiv.

^c A strong fortress in that province.

^d 175,000 l. which some historians report to have been sent to Shah Tahmas by Ismael.

^e See Vol. I. chap. xv.

as he had already opened a communication by a canal, between the Volga and the Neva, which communicates with the Baltic; by this means he had rendered St. Petersburg, on the side of Europe, what Astrachan was on the side of Asia. As he was sensible, that the commerce of Asia could not be conveniently carried on but by the Caspian sea, he ordered a chart of it to be made; he likewise sent prince Beckawitz^m into Tartary, where he was barbarously murdered. The cruelty with which the Ousbegs massacred a whole caravan coming from China in 1721, having revived the memory of this unhappy catastrophe, and of the outrages committed against the Russian merchants at the taking of Shama-kieⁿ; the Russian emperor was induced to send an ambassador into Persia. This minister was commissioned to make his complaints to Shah Hussein, if this prince was still upon the throne, concerning what had passed in Shirvan; and if he no longer reigned, to insist upon the usurper's giving satisfaction for the behaviour of the Lefgees, the Ousbegs, and his other allies.

It is very probable, that the real motive of the embassy was to examine the situation of the affairs of that kingdom, of which the Russian court had received but imperfect accounts. Maghmud, to whom the Russian minister addressed himself, made answer, "That he was desirous of living upon good terms with the Czar, whom fame had represented as a wise and warlike prince; but as the people he complained of were neither his allies nor subjects, he could not prescribe laws to them, nor be accountable for their conduct. He therefore recommended to him, to provide for the security of the caravans henceforwards by strong convoys, unless he chose to enter into an alliance with those nations, through whose territories they were to pass."

The Czar was not satisfied with this answer; the opportunity was favourable to make himself master of the western shore of the Caspian. For this purpose he assembled in the neighbourhood of Astrachan, an army of 30,000 men, composed of these veterans who had served in the war with Sweden; these were joined by a body of Tartars, Cossacks, and Khalmucks. The 29th of July, he embarked on the Caspian, and anchored the 4th of August at the mouth of the river of Terki, on the frontiers of Daghestan. From thence a lieutenant was dispatched to Tarku, with orders to deliver
to

^m See his history, Vol. I. chap. 29.

ⁿ By the Lefgees. See chap. xiv.

to Aldi Gherai, one of the princes of the Lesgees, a manifesto, in which the Czar pretended, according to the ordinary stile of such writings, " That it was not any ambitious
 " view of enlarging his dominions that brought him thither ;
 " but an intent to rescue the king of Persia, and his loyal
 " subjects, from the tyranny of the Afghans ; and to chastise those rebels, for the disorders and excesses which they
 " had committed against the Russians : he concluded, with
 " threatening severe punishments against those who should
 " persist in their rebellion." These manifestos were also sent to Derbend, Shamakie, and Baku.

During these transactions, a brigadier, who had been detached with a body of 600 horse to take possession of Andreof, was attacked by 5000 of the inhabitants of that place ; but he gave them so warm a reception, that he drove them back into the town, which was soon abandoned to pillage. The tenth of August the fleet landed the infantry at Ahrahin near Sulack, where they threw up some entrenchments to cover themselves : here the Shamhall Aldi Gherai, the lords of Gorski and Axan, and the sultan of a district, whose name was Mahommed, were presented to the Czar. Aldi Gherai received the Russians into Tarku : the end of the month the army resumed their march, passed the rivers Manas, Ahchy, and Boynak, and encamped on the borders of the Nitzi. The Sultan Mahommed opposed their march with a body of 10,000 men ; but after a sharp encounter, his troops were put to flight.

The first of September the army encamped on the banks of the Buhan, where they received intelligence, that the inhabitants of Baku earnestly desired the protection of the Czar against the insults of the Lesgees, who had vexed them with inroads for two years. As the Army drew near to Derbend^o, the governor marched out of the town, followed by the principal inhabitants, and presented the keys to the Russian monarch. This prince was received with the sound of a numerous artillery, and the acclamations of the people. Passing thro' the town, he encamped at a small distance from the walls, on the south side. The situation of this place, I have already observed, is such as constitutes it the gate into Asia. After this conquest, he resolved to return home : having therefore confirmed the governor ^P in his office, and left a garrison

^o Derbend, in the Persian language, signifies a strong fortification ; as in Turkish, Demir Capi, by which name they call this place, is a gate of iron. ^P The city is considered as distinct from the citadel, in the latter a Russian officer commanded.

garrison of two thousand Russians in the citadel, he ordered part of his troops to march back: of these, some were re-imbarked, and others went by land to Astrachan; those remaining being sufficient to extend his conquest in the next year: he arrived himself in that city by sea the middle of October.

While the Russians were making themselves masters of the northern provinces of Persia, this unhappy empire saw a new storm impending towards the west. The port having been informed by Shah Hussein's own ambassador, of the extremity to which his master was reduced, thought of reaping some advantage by his misfortunes. The opportunity was favourable, as she was secured against her ancient enemy by the treaty of Passarowitz¹. The spirit of faction, which generally precedes the subversion of monarchies, had diffused itself from Isfahan into the western provinces; so that the Turks had all reason to expect that they might extend their conquest with a rapid progress. Things being thus situated, the Persian minister was ordered to depart from Constantinople in the month of April; and the grand visier turned his whole attention to improve these favourable circumstances to the advantage of the Ottoman empire. Such were the different motions of these powers to the end of this year.

We shall now see what was transacting in the center of Persia during the course of the ensuing year. The city of Casbin had no reason to be long pleased with the change of government; for Aman Ola was hardly master of the place; when his insatiable avarice prompted him to treat the inhabitants with all the rigour which Maghmud generally shewed to conquered cities. These extorsions, and the unbridled licentiousness of the soldiery, soon alienated the minds of the people. The yoke growing more intolerable every day, the leading men among them assembled privately, to consult on the means of delivering themselves from this oppressive tyranny. It was resolved, that part of the inhabitants should attack the royal palace at an hour appointed, while the rest were to fall sword in hand upon the Afghans dispersed in different quarters of the town; and to the end that their signal might cause no alarm, it was agreed to strike the first blow at the sound of the horn, which they make use of a little after sun-set, to give the people notice that the baths are ready.

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¹ Concluded the 21st of July 1718 with the emperor Charles VI.

The eighth of January was the day fixed for putting their design in execution. The conspirators had made all the necessary dispositions, and were waiting only for the critical moment of taking their full revenge ; when some suspicious appearances determined them to anticipate the time. They had perceived early in the afternoon, that the Afghans abandoned some of their posts, and took possession of others ; and that they were assembling in a body, in a manner which seemed to express the fear of danger. Upon this the conspirators took to their arms with great precipitation, and, without waiting for any other signal, fell upon the enemy on every side with the utmost fury.

Aman Ola, alarmed at the report of the musquets, mounted on horseback, and hurried away to the great square, whither the common danger had brought most of the Afghans together. Both parties were equally animated with the spirit of hatred and revenge, which rendered the victory for some time dubious. Aman Ola, though wounded in the right shoulder by a musquet ball, continued to encourage his troops by his example ; but seeing them in danger of being overpowered by numbers, he was obliged at length to retreat to the palace, where not thinking himself secure, he went through the gardens by a private way, and got out of the reach of the enemy. The Afghans lost 1600 men in this action ; their flight was so precipitate, that they left all their baggage and treasure behind them, and their slaves recovered their liberty.

No sooner did this melancholy news reach the ear of Maghmud, by an express messenger from Aman Ola ; than this prince resolved upon an expedient, to prevent an insurrection in Isfahan. He ordered the guns to be fired, giving out that his general had taken Tæhmas Myrza prisoner ; and to confirm this report, he caused illuminations and other public rejoicings to be made, which served as a pretext to double the guards, and to hinder any stranger from entering the city. This piece of policy could not be exerted upon a more proper occasion ; for as the sending away the detachment under Aman Ola had considerably weakened the army, there was room to apprehend, that the people of Isfahan, upon being informed of what had passed, might attempt to follow the example of the inhabitants of Casbin.

C H A P. XXIV.

Maghmud orders the Persian ministers and lords to be massacred. Arrival of a Turkish envoy. Isfahan is almost depopulated. Excursions of Nazr Ulla. Heavy contributions laid upon the European traders.

THE great uneasiness which the affair of Casbin had created in the mind of Maghmud, was in some measure removed a few days after, by the return of the detachment under Aman Ola. But how different was their appearance ! When they set out upon the expedition, their numbers, their spirit, their intrepid countenance seemed to promise new victories ; but the excessive cold, against which they were not provided, and the wounds which numbers of them had received, had rendered them rather objects of compassion than fear. The misery and hardships they had endured, destroyed many of them on the road, and the remainder were harassed by their march, and dispirited by their defeat.

Ashreff, upon leaving Casbin, had taken the road to Kandahar with 300 horse, from an apprehension that this insurrection would be followed by a general revolt ; or from a desire of freeing himself from the danger, to which the jealousy of Maghmud continually exposed him ; so that this army, by no means appeared the same, as that which had left Isfahan two months before.

Maghmud now resolved on a project which he had been meditating for some time. The insurrection of Casbin made such an impression on him, that he thought himself in great danger in the midst of a numerous and disaffected multitude, with only a handful of soldiers about him. The ordinary suggestion of his cruel mind under these circumstances was that of murder ; for by putting one part of them to death, he hoped to remain more absolute master of the other. To prevent this barbarous expedient from causing the very insurrection which he apprehended, he determined to begin with those, whose credit, rank, or birth, might enable them to form or support a faction. With this intent, the very same day that Aman Ola arrived, he invited the ministers, lords, and other Persian chiefs, to a public entertainment. They came without any mistrust, to the number of three hundred ; but as soon as they were seated, his guard fell upon them with their sabres, and barbarously murdered them.

Among these victims to his infernal policy, were the great chancellor of the empire, the governor of Isfahan and his younger brother, both of them brothers of Mahommed Kouli Khan, prince of Georgia; the Khan of Cokhilan, the grand master of the artillery, and most of the principal persons of note belonging to the court of Hussein. The Athemat Doulet was spared, in consideration of his brother's having facilitated the escape of the Afghans at the affair of Casbin. The horror of this cruel execution, was increased by the circumstance attending the murder of a boy of twelve years of age. He was son to Rostam Myrza prince of Georgia, and as he had been adopted by an Afghan, he fled for shelter during the massacre to the officers of that nation, whose protection he implored with tears; but neither his tender years, nor the solicitations of the officers could save him: he was torn from them and butchered.

The bodies of those that were massacred, were exposed on the Meidan before the palace. To prevent their posterity from rising up in revenge, Maghmud gave orders for all their children also to be murdered. The impious manner in which he relieved his dastardly fears of these children, was yet more shocking. Two hundred young persons of the first nobility of Persia and Georgia, were led together from the academy where they were educated, to an open field; and being there permitted to run for their lives, the Afghans galloped after them, and enjoyed the horrible sport of chasing them like savage beasts, till they were all slaughtered. Maghmud, whose design was to secure the throne by the total extirpation of the nobility, to colour so flagitious a conduct, pretended that these young lords had formed a conspiracy against his life. His barbarous policy did not stop here: he had picked out of Shah Hussein's guards, and other troops belonging to that prince, near 3000 men, and taken them into his pay. These he assembled in an area within the palace, under the pretence of giving them an extraordinary allowance of Pleo: and while they were eating it, a body of troops, which had been posted there for that purpose, fell upon them, and cut them to pieces, before they had time to recover themselves.

Maghmud now imagined he might, without any disguise, securely destroy such as were objects of jealousy. Accordingly he gave general orders to his soldiers, to put every one to the sword, who had at any time received pay from the exchequer, either by way of salary, or pension. As the enquiry was committed to the soldiers, who were constituted in a great measure the judges of the sentence which they were to
 exc-

execute, the intentions of their chief were extremely well answered; for during the fifteen days this massacre lasted, the despondency of the people was arrived to such a pitch, that one might see a single man leading three or four Persians to execution. It was impossible to render such a series of barbarities excusable. Maghmud however pretended that he had been informed the inhabitants of Isfahan, after the example of those of Casbin, intended to rise up in arms, and to massacre all the Afghans. It is even believed, that he spared the lives of some Persians of distinction, to give his conduct the air of justice, as if these had disclosed to him this pretended conspiracy.

The third day of this tragedy, Osman Aga, whom the Bascha of Bagdat had dispatched into Persia by order of the grand signior, arrived at Isfahan. A detachment of two hundred men was assigned for his guard, with orders not to suffer any one to come into the palace where he was lodged. The subject of his commission is not known: Maghmud suspected from the discourse he had with him, that he was a spy, who, under the sanction of the law of nations, was come to pry into the state of affairs. This prince, who was naturally of a proud and violent temper, would have paid but little regard to this law, if his ministers had not represented the inconveniencies which might attend the violation of it. He was therefore prevailed on, not only to dissemble his resentment, but also to permit that this Turkish minister, in company with some Afghans who were appointed to watch him, should see Shah Hussein.

The Turks not knowing what was transacting at Isfahan, had sent Osman to this unfortunate prince; but he was ordered eighteen days after his arrival to depart. He had reason enough to think, that his presence had been disagreeable; for they searched both himself and his baggage twice at the city gates; and three miles from thence, upon visiting some chests which had not been opened in the town, two young Persian women were dragged out of them, and stabbed upon the spot, as also some slaves of the same nation, who were disguised in a Turkish dress, thinking to escape among the Aga's retinue.

Maghmud, in the mean time, used every endeavour to weaken the Persian inhabitants of Isfahan. The blood which he had spilt, was not sufficient to remove his anxiety. He ordered a proclamation to be made, that whoever was inclined to quit the town, should be at liberty to retire; except a certain number of young Persians whom he had chosen, in

order to train them up to the manners and discipline of his own nation. In consequence of which, all those who were able to bear arms, and had not complied with the tacit orders implied in that permission, were secretly put to death.

The few inhabitants that were left in the city could give him no further umbrage; he therefore applied his thoughts to those in the open country. Encouraged by the insurrection at Casbin, these were every where in arms against the rebels; especially the inhabitants of Ben Isfahan, who continued to signalize their hatred against the Afghans, so as to kill several of them at the very gates of the town, from whence they also carried off some pieces of cannon. The probable effect of such an example, was not the only circumstance that disturbed Maghmud. The provisions which he had caused to be brought into Isfahan were almost consumed; and as the insurrection of the open country hindered a fresh supply, the Afghans were in danger of being famished in their turn.

To remedy these inconveniencies, Maghmud gave orders to Nazr Ulla to take the field with a detachment of 3000 men. This general was repulsed at several of these little towns; however, he took some by storm, and obliged others to surrender; so that at length he obtained a supply of provisions. Among other places Koomsha, a city situated fifteen leagues south of Isfahan, submitted to him. As this supply had been raised in a country ruined by the war, it was not sufficient to maintain the Afghan army for any length of time: Maghmud therefore gave Nazr Ulla a reinforcement of 1000 men, with orders to make an incursion into the northern parts of Irac Agemi. This general set out accordingly the 4th of April, and directing his march thro' the deserts to the southward, the better to surprize the enemy, appeared suddenly in the neighbourhood of Hamadan. The Khan who was governor of that country marched out at the head of 3000 men to give him battle: but his troops were too raw to stand the fire of the Afghans, who, after putting them to flight, made three attempts to take the city by storm.

We have already observed, that the Afghans had neither patience nor skill to carry on a regular siege; so that a single wall retarded their progress as much as the strongest bastion. Nazr Ulla being discouraged at the loss he had sustained in endeavouring to take the place, contented himself with ravaging the country. As things were situated, there was nothing difficult in this undertaking. The terror occasioned by
this

this sudden incursion, and by the apprehensions of the cruelty of the Afghans, was so great, that wherever they turned their arms, they found the towns and villages deserted. It is mentioned as a matter of astonishment, that during the whole course of this expedition, none but the keeper of the king's studs in Khousistan, and the Khan of Hamadan, had the courage to oppose the rebels. The former indeed was more successful than this general; for taking 2000 men with him, who were appointed to guard the king's horses, he attacked a party of the rebels, and carried off a considerable number of camels loaded with plunder.

This little army had therefore leisure and opportunity to pillage as much as they pleased; after which Nazr Ulla, willing to fulfill his master's intentions, led them towards Derghezín, a town situate within three days journey of Hamadan, on the side of Casbin. This town and its neighbourhood, are inhabited by people of the same sect as the Afghans. It was the policy of Abas I. to transport the inhabitants of conquered places from one country to another, with the view not only of preventing any danger from their disaffection, but likewise of depopulating the frontiers exposed to an enemy; this prince had removed these people from Kourdistán, to the territories of Hamadan, about Derghezín; where, according to their original custom, they lived the greatest part of the year in tents. This conformity of manners and religion, first gave the notion to Nazr Ulla of inviting them to Isfahan. He engaged their chiefs, and managed the affair so dexterously, that he persuaded them to agree to this new migration. It is probable the chiefs themselves might prefer the houses of the capital to their cottages and tents; but Nazr Ulla had soon reason to think, that this change was not agreed to with the unanimous consent of these people, for numbers of them, biased by their affection for their own inhabitants, deserted, and returned home again.

While Nazr Ulla was ravaging this part of Persia, Maghmud did not act more humanely towards the people of Isfahan, not sparing even the foreigners, as the English factors there experienced; for besides a considerable sum of money, he took a large value in cloth and stuffs. The Dutch East-India company's factors were treated more severely. The merchants of that nation had sold, during the famine, a great quantity of bad sugar at an excessive high price; and as the extravagant dearness of every kind of provision, had stripped even the wealthy of the greatest part of their money, the Dutch laid out their whole capital, in purchasing at a very

ow rate the most valuable moveables and commodities in the city, as stuffs, silks, furs, jewels, &c. But they were at length obliged to refund; for Maghmud ordered their standard to be beaten down; and compelled them to discover where they had concealed their wealth. They had found the means of remitting some part of their treasure at different times to Bender Abassi, yet the sum said to be extorted from them upon this occasion amounted to near 400,000 crowns^f.

The Indians, whom commercial views had induced to settle in Isfahan, were also taxed at the rate of 27,000 tomans^c. After this Maghmud made a fresh attack upon the Armenians of Julfa. We have already mentioned that they had given a bond payable at the termination of the siege, and that nine of their chiefs had been arrested as sureties for their engagement, which still amounted to 50,000 tomans. Whether it was thro' design or inability, these people had failed payment; but Maghmud sent for the principal of them, and caused the heads of three of the sureties to be cut off, among these was their Calentar or civil magistrate. After extorting some money from the rest through the terror of this execution, he at length permitted them to return home.

C H A P. XXV.

Zeberdest Khan lays siege to Ghiez, and takes it. The inhabitants of Ben Isfahan surrender by capitulation. Nazr Ulla returns with a considerable booty and provisions. A new colony of Afghans arrives from Kandahar. The Vali of Georgia deposed. Nazr Ulla is sent into Farfistan. Maghmud besieges Ghulpaigan. Tæhmas marches an army to raise the siege; his army defeated, and Ghulpaigan^u taken. Resolution and unhappy fate of Lutf Ali Khan.

IN the mean time Maghmud carried on the war with great vigour against the several towns situated in the neighbourhood of Isfahan. He had committed the care of subduing those places to Zeberdest Khan, who was taken prisoner twenty years before by the Afghans, and had passed from the state of slavery, to one of the principal posts in their army. This officer maintained the reputation of bravery, by which he had made his fortune. Without amusing himself,

^f A kind of ensign or banner, like that used on board of ships, which the consuls of European nations put up before their houses.

^c 100,000 l. ^d 67,500 l. ^e This is a town near Cassan.

himself, as his predecessor had done, in ravaging the open country, or in plundering a few defenceless towns, he ventured towards the beginning of May to lay siege to Ghiez, a fortress before which the Afghans had miscarried more than once. This place was situated within three leagues of Isfahan, upon an eminence which commands the country, and was esteemed very strong. The Khan summoned the garrison to surrender; upon the governor's refusal, he sent some Perses to break open the gates with their hatchets. But the reception his men met, soon convinced him that he must proceed with greater precaution. He therefore resolved to undermine the walls, and open a subterraneous passage into the town. The work was directed by a Persee, whose profession was to dig wells: when it was completed, he ordered a detachment to make their way through it sword in hand. The besieged, astonished to see the enemy start up from under the ground, a thing of which they had no conception, no longer resisted. Most of them were put to the sword, and their wives and children carried into slavery. This conquest proved of great service to the Afghans, for it not only secured the neighbouring villages, but likewise contributed greatly to engage the inhabitants of Ben Isfahan to submit to their government.

It was against this town that Zeberdest Khan turned his arms, after the taking of Ghiez. We have already seen, how its inhabitants maintained the reputation, which they had acquired by the advantages gained over Maghmud and Aman Ola: their example served to keep up the spirit of resistance in other neighbouring towns. Hitherto they had been deaf to every proposal made by the usurper, but their present circumstances began to render them more docile; they considered that prince Tæhmas, whose name was hardly any longer mentioned, was not in a capacity to lend them assistance; that the taking of Ghiez enabled the enemy to blockade them more conveniently; and as it was now impossible for them to support an independency, it would be exposing themselves to inevitable miseries to no purpose, to hold out any longer. These reflections inclined them to acquiesce to the solicitations of Zeberdest Khan. On the other hand they were deterred by the apprehension that Maghmud might resent the treatment shewn to his brother and his other relations, with the several damages they had done him. The Khan however dissipated their fears, by offering that the capitulation should be signed by the principal officers of the army, who were to engage their honours
for

for the strict execution of it. On these conditions, they submitted at length to the yoke of the usurper.

Maghmud soon justified their suspicions: he could not forgive the damages they had done him, nor their having several times endeavoured to persuade the inhabitants of Isfahan to deliver themselves by a general insurrection from the yoke under which they groaned. His intention was to engage them in some step, which would justify his breaking the capitulation, and serve as a pretext to his vengeance. He therefore endeavoured by means of some persons, who should feign a detestation of himself and his government, to persuade them to revolt; but these people were too wise or too virtuous to be caught in this snare. They were as religious observers of the oath they had taken to him, as of the allegiance they had sworn to their lawful sovereign; hence they seized those emissaries, and sent them to Isfahan in irons, that Maghmud might inflict what punishment he pleased upon them. This mark of fidelity at length reconciled him to them.

The return of Nazr Ulla, after an excursion of three months, afforded no less pleasure to Maghmud, than the reduction of those two places. The apprehension he had been under, that the city would be depopulated by a second famine, was entirely removed when he saw this general arrive safe in Isfahan, with a great number of camels loaded with provisions and booty; also with many thousand Derghezins, who might be considered as a new colony, not subject to be suspected, but entirely agreeable to the Afghans.

Towards the end of June appeared a second colony; this was a caravan of several thousand camels, which arrived from Kandahar. These succours were owing to the prudence of Maghmud, at the very beginning of his reign. After the defeat of Moula Moussa by Myrza Ismael, by which a great treasure was plundered, he sent Mahommed Nischan, his grand master of the ceremonies^w, with a fresh supply of money into that country, to make new levies: and as this prince perceived that his soldiers deserted in bodies, and that whole companies had returned home, from the desire of seeing their wives and children; he entrusted this officer with 8000 camels, to bring the families of those Afghans who were already in the army, as likewise of those whom he should enlist into the service. This precaution, together with the fame which he had acquired of having ascended the throne of Persia, rendered this caravan much more considerable than was expected,

Maghmud

Maghmud distributed part of the deserted houses and lands to the Afghans and Derghezips * lately arrived ; and finding that these colonies, tho' numerous, were not sufficient to re-people the town, he raised a new fund out of the last taxes, and put it into the hands of Mahommed Nischan, with orders to lay it out in raising 15,000 men more, and to bring them from Kandahar with their families.

In the mean time Shah Tæhmas continued at Tavis, contriving means to recover his dominions ; but gave no demonstration of a capacity equal to the part he had to act. His conduct was but a natural consequence of the manner in which he had been educated. According to the custom established by Abas the Great, he was not permitted to go out of the seraglio, till the very day he was named successor to the throne. The same prince, by an effect of his jealousy, committed the education of the princes of the blood to eunuchs, whose principal care was to keep them in ignorance, Tæhmas came so rude and unpolished out of their hands, that he was obliged to rely intirely upon the information and fidelity of the people about him. The severe manner in which he was educated, was moreover productive of another inconvenience. He was hardly released from the seraglio, when his favourite passions began to predominate. Thinking himself no longer accountable for his conduct, he abandoned himself intirely to his pleasures, which neither reason nor experience had instructed him how to regulate. To pursue the true objects of pleasure, as agreeable to the character of a prince, can only be the effect of wise instructions. What then could be expected from this heir of the Persian diadem ?

He had already made one false step in discharging his army at Calbin ; and now he made another no less injurious to his interest. Soon after he was declared king, he sent a messenger to Vachtanga, Vali of Georgia, with orders to repair forthwith to Tavis, and pay him homage. A resentment of this prince's behaviour in refusing to march to the succour of Isfahan, or some false policy, occasioned this summons to be couched in terms, which only served to irritate a person who was naturally haughty, and very little inclined to obedience. The Vali provoked at this treatment, despised the orders ; but foreseeing danger from the disaffection which the grantees of the country shewed to him ; and having already fruitlessly attempted to subject his territories to Russia, he ⁿ now wrote to Constantinople, offering to pay the port annually twenty-

* Sometimes called Darguzzis.

ⁿ Towards the end of February.

twenty-four purses, by way of tribute, on condition they would maintain him in the possession of his government, and confirm the privileges which the kings of Persia had granted to the princes his predecessors, as well as to the nation in general.

The Vali had not time to execute this last project; for Tæhmas deposed him in March following, and nominated in his place, Mahommed Kouli Khan, prince of Caket, who was also descended from the antient kings of Georgia. The new Vali presented himself before Teflis not long after, in order to take possession of his government; but not having a force sufficient to contend with Vachtanga, who, contrary to the advice of the grandees of the nation, had given arms to the people; he was obliged to return to his principality for succours. As soon as he arrived there, he assembled all the military people that could be found, and entered into a treaty with his neighbours the Lesgees, who supplied him with a body of 7000 men; the junction of these forces augmented his army so considerably, that on the 8th of May he appeared again before Teflis.

Vachtanga foreseeing this storm, had already concerted his measures. Finding that the inhabitants began to treat him publickly as a rebel, and that he could no longer depend on their affection, he quitted the town privately the preceding night, and carried with him his family, and the great treasure which he had amassed during the course of a long reign. This proud Georgian then felt the punishment of the mischiefs caused by his disobedience. Having wandered from place to place as a fugitive, in August 1725 he took refuge in St. Petersburg; where, for reasons of state, and the connexion he had with the Russian court, he found a safe azylum. The new Vali meeting no longer with a competitor, made his entrance into Teflis. The grandees, and the inhabitants in general, were convinced of their former error, and received him with great demonstrations of joy. He had not been long with them, when he taxed them with 50,000 tomans^y, part of which was paid immediately, and the remainder a few months after.

In this interval the Afghah army was increased by a body of 6000 Derghezins, whom Nazr Ulla had collected before his return, and by a considerable number of Turkish adventurers, whom Maghmud had taken into his pay, as likewise by the recruits arrived from Kandahar. This prince was now able to engage in some fresh enterprize, but apprehending

ing that his absence might cause some troubles in the capital, he resolved to entrust the execution of his designs to the experience of Nazr Ulla. Thus the army was again divided into two bodies : this general having the most numerous under his command, received the Sultan's directions to fall upon the province of Farfistan.

Maghmud was of too active a genius to be long idle : leaving a sufficient garrison in Isfahan, he led the remainder of his troops against Ghulpaigan, a town situated in a plain westward of Cashan. The inhabitants of this place were strongly attached to Tæhmas's party, and had neglected no precaution necessary to enable them to hold out a long siege. Maghmud caused his cannon to be fired against the walls, and then commanded his troops to storm the town in three different places. The Persians defended themselves with great resolution, but not without abandoning some of the works which they had thrown up.

Things were in this situation, when Maghmud received intelligence, that a new enemy had started up against him. The success which Tæhmas had in reducing Teflis, raised the courage of that prince ; he appointed Fendoun, Khan of the Kourds, to command his troops ; and having ordered the Vali's of Loristan and Arabia, and the Khan of Cokhilan to join that general with all the forces of their respective governments, he gave directions to him to march to Isfahan, and attack the usurper. Fendoun Khan was prevented from drawing any succours from those provinces, by the motion of the Ottoman armies ; who having invaded Georgia, as we shall have occasion to mention more particularly, became masters of that country, and threatened the frontiers of Persia on every side. This general had however 8000 men under his command, all choice troops, which Tæhmas had assembled in the neighbourhood of Tavis, and with which he might have rendered some service : but preferring plunder, he pillaged the quarter of the city where the Armenians reside, under a pretence that these people favoured his master's enemies ; and adding imposture to this act of villainy, he sent the heads of some of those who had been murdered on this occasion to the Shah, as if they belonged to the Afghans killed in battle ; but the fraud was easily discovered, as the heads of several Armenian priests were known by the tonsure.

A general so little a friend to justice, seemed to promise no great success towards retrieving the affairs of the Shah ; however he determined to attack the enemy. He knew that
Maghmud

Maghmud had marched out of Isfahan with only 10,000 men; and presumed with good reason that this army, already harrassed with the cold and continual rains, would not be able to withstand the joint attack of his troops and of the inhabitants of Ghulpaigan. Flattered with this notion, he marched against the Afghans, but was soon put to flight, with the loss of 2000 of his forces. He then retired to his own country, whither he invited the Turks, who, on condition of his fealty to them, left him in possession of his government.

Tæhmas was thus punished for intrusting the command of his troops to a man, who had no military abilities; and whose fidelity he ought to have suspected, since he could not be ignorant that the Kourds are of the same sect as the Turks their neighbours. This event was followed with the loss of Macon. These new rebels having entered that place by surprize the very same year, put the garrison to the sword, and made themselves masters of that fortress, which in those countries is esteemed impregnable.

The loss of this battle was also attended with that of Ghulpaigan. Some of the inhabitants endeavoured to throw themselves into a fort contiguous to the town, but Maghmud cut most of them to pieces. The remainder no sooner beheld a barbed elephant brought against their walls in order to make a breach, than they submitted to the conqueror.

The Sultan having thus routed an army, taken a town, and obliged a fortress to surrender, returned triumphant to Isfahan. He then entrusted the command of his troops to Zeberdest Khan, who not long after made himself master of Honfar, a large town situate within five days journey north-west of the capital. Towards the end of December this general marched against Casban; whose inhabitants, contrary to the allegiance they had sworn when Aman Ola was upon his march towards Casbin, had taken up arms in favour of prince Tæhmas.

Lutf Ali Khan, famous for the defeat he gave the rebels before Khermah, and afterwards for his disgrace at a time when he might have saved the empire, was not included in the massacre of the nobles already mentioned. Maghmud was desirous of gaining him over to his interest; and though this faithful subject had always avoided entering into any engagements prejudicial to his lawful sovereign; yet the Sultan, hoping to win him, continued to load him with favours. Lutf Ali Khan being thus esteemed and respected at Court, might have spent his days in ease and tranquility; but his
loyalty

loyalty would not permit him to be passive : he thought it his duty to serve Tæhmas his lawful sovereign. With this view he waited a favourable opportunity, and made his escape from Isfahan, designing to join the Shah in Tavis.

The flight of Lutf Ali Khan, flung the Afghans into fresh apprehensions. They could not forget that this general, after the victory he had obtained over them, was just upon the point of crushing them in their own country. They knew that he was acquainted with their weak condition ; and should he put himself at the head of an army, which his reputation might enable him to collect, it was hard to say what would be the consequence. Maghmud caused diligent search to be made for him, and promised considerable rewards to those who should discover him. They had not yet finished their enquiries, when the unfortunate Lutf Ali Khan appeared in sight. The people of Ben Isfahan having discovered him in their town, brought him to the usurper. Maghmud no sooner approached him, than forgetting his own dignity, he fell upon him like a mad-man, and hewed him in pieces with his sabre. How greatly the tyrant stood in fear of the virtues of this illustrious general, appeared by this barbarous and unprincely action ; as well as by the privileges and favours, with which he rewarded the zeal and affection of the inhabitants of Ben Isfahan.

C H A P. XXVI.

The Turks send an Army into Georgia. The Czar subdues Ghilan. Uneasiness of the Ottoman port at the progress of the Russians. Tæhmas sends an ambassador to the port, who miscarries in his negotiation. Ismael Beg is sent ambassador to the Court of Russia, and concludes a treaty with the Czar. Particulars of this treaty.

DURING these transactions in the interior parts of the Persian Dominions ; in the month of October the preceding year, the Ottoman court dispatched Nisli Mahomed Aga, as envoy to Peter the Great. As he passed through Crim Tartary, the Khan informed him of the circumstances of this monarch's expedition into Persia. He took the road to Astrachan, where he expected to meet the emperor² ; but hearing that this prince was set out for Mosco, he changed his

² We use the word emperor and Czar in common, the former is most proper, though the latter is most familiar.

his rout. Nisli Mahommed Aga had received a strict charge to make all possible expedition ; but as soon as he arrived on the Russian territories, he was detained by the officer who commanded on that frontier, under a pretence that he could not permit him to proceed any further, without express orders from his court. This difficulty, which seemed to arise only from too scrupulous an exactness in the officer, was not removed till the Czar received news from Nepleuiff his resident at Constantinople. This monarch being then informed of the dispositions of the port, commissioned one of his officers to receive the Turkish envoy upon the frontier, and to conduct him to court.

Nisli Mahommed Aga then proceeded on his journey, and arrived at Mosco, where he made his public entry the sixth of February. Some days after he was conducted to the audience of the Czar, with the honours due to his character : he delivered his credentials, and begged that commissaries might be nominated to treat with him, concerning the affairs committed to his charge. The grand signior's letter to the Czar was conceived in very strong, tho' moderate terms. The Ottoman emperor intimated to him, that he had carried his resentment to a sufficient length against the Lefgees ; and gave him to understand, that as these people were Sunnis, and consequently under his protection, he could not be an idle spectator, in seeing them reduced under the dominion of any christian prince. This was signifying, that if Russia intended to preserve the peace inviolate, she must give up Tarku and Derbend, and demolish the fort of the holy cross.

The Aga explained himself fully upon the subject to baron Schafiroff, vice-chancellor of Russia, and solicited strongly for a quick dispatch ; but the Czar, being informed from Constantinople that the Turks were as desirous as himself to avoid coming to a rupture, deferred giving an answer.

While the Turkish envoy endeavoured to discover the motive of this affected delay, Hahdgee Daoud Beg, chief of Shamakie, being alarmed to see Derbend in the hands of a prince, who pretended he had taken up arms with no other view than to chastise him for his misdemeanours, had sent a messenger to Constantinople, offering to put himself under the protection of the grand signior. As this proposal facilitated the views which the Turks had upon Georgia, it was received with joy ; and the Hahdgee was assured by the grand signior, that to discharge the duties which his office of
Imam

Imam^a imposed upon him, he would soon rescue him from the yoke of the christians, and be revenged of the Georgians, who had encouraged the enemy to invade their country. After which he nominated the Hahdgee, Khan of Derbend, and in this quality he sent him the standards and horses tails, with which Bascha's of the first rank are honoured in Turkey.

This event confirmed the port in the resolution of engaging the Czar to abandon his conquests. In order the more easily to persuade him into this measure, the grand signior published a manifesto, setting forth, that as Derbend formerly constituted a part of his empire, and as the protection which he owed to mussulmen in general, obliged him to assist the Lesgees against the enterprizes of christian powers, he could no longer continue the peace with Russia, unless the Czar would withdraw his troops from Dagistan, and particularly from Derbend; which he could so much the less forsake, as there was still a mosque there, which was formerly built by the port.

The last reason was so much the more plausible, as the law forbids the Mahommedans to give up, either by capitulation or treaty, any of those towns where such temples have been raised. This manifesto was hardly sent into Russia, and distributed among the foreign ministers at Constantinople, when the port received letters, by which Vachtanga offered, under the conditions already related, to acknowledge the sovereignty of the grand signior.

The port, inclined to make advantage of these different proposals, gave orders to the Baschas of the provinces of Asia, to join all the troops of their respective governments to those of the Bascha of Erzeroum, who was named general in chief^a of the army designed against Georgia. And in order to provide against any enterprizes of the Russians, the garrisons were reinforced, and the magazines of the frontier towns filled with provisions. But the real designs of the port were against Persia: this is manifest from her refusing the offer which the Khan of Crim Tartary made to obstruct the progress of the Russians on the side of Persia, by laying siege to Astrachan.

Peter the Great was in the same disposition, in this respect, as the port, and was making the same military preparations. He gave orders for putting Derbend into a state of defence, and for rendering the troops complete. He then assembled an army on the frontiers of Dagistan, under pretence that

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the

^a Chief and defender of the law, and sovereign of the people who profess it.

^b Seraskier.

the Lefgees threatened to make an irruption into the kingdom of Astrachan.

In the mean time he continued to amuse the Turkish envoy, and to insinuate to this minister, that the interest of both courts was to agree concerning the conquest they were to make in Persia; that this was the way to avoid any obstacles that might arise on either side; and that acting thus in concert, they might settle the government of that monarchy, in the manner most agreeable to their respective interests. And joining menaces to persuasion, he dispatched Nisli Mahommed Aga home with an answer to this effect: that it was not his intention to make the least infringement in the peace, which he had concluded with the port: but if this power should attempt to oppose his views, he would take proper measures to cross the designs which the grand signior might have against the countries situate between the two seas. At the same time he gave orders to transport the artillery, with ammunition and provisions, for taking the field; and leaving Mosco, he set out the beginning of March for St. Petersburg.

It is evident that the Czar's proposals were equally advantageous to both empires: of this the port was convinced, but it was difficult to put them in execution. The Russians and Turks had in some measure declared war against Persia, one by invading Dagistan, and the other by marching an army into Georgia; so that it did not seem consistent for Tæhmas to commit his interests to neighbours who were stripping him of his dominions.

The port had still greater obstacles to surmount. As soon as Maghmud was become master of Isfahan, he enjoined the inhabitants, upon pain of death, to break off all epistolary correspondence, and by the different precautions which he had taken on this occasion, the success of the siege had been kept a secret. Upon the return of Osman Aga from Isfahan, the court of Constantinople was informed that this prince had obliged Shah Husein to resign his capital and his diadem. This great event occasioned new deliberations. Maghmud seemed possessed of the qualifications and fortune of those conquerors, who in former ages had ravaged Asia. The Turkish ministers however were not so much afraid of his power, as embarrassed by his being of the sect of the Sunnis as well as themselves. They concluded that their troops would refuse to fight against a prince, who, by the destruction of the Persian empire, appeared as a hero of their religion.

This

This difficulty increased, as they were to enter into an alliance with a christian power, not only to share between them the different provinces of a monarchy ceded by the abdication of Shah Hussein to Maghmud, but likewise to dethrone him, and to substitute in his stead Tæhmas, a prince of the sect of Ali. Yet it seemed prudent to put a stop to the progress of a man, whose ambitious enterprizes already threatned the empire; and there was no possibility of effecting this with any security to the frontier, but by accepting the Czar's proposal.

The port was thus in suspense between the fear of Maghmud's future success, and the hope of reaping some advantage from the situation to which he had reduced the kingdom of Persia. The Czar, who had prolonged the negotiation with the Turkish minister upon the same principle, gave orders that he should be conducted to the frontier by very slow journeys; so that he did not reach Constantinople till the end of May. As soon as he arrived, he assured the grand signior, that the Czar had no other intention than to support a good understanding with his highness; adding, that this prince had sent full powers to his resident, to act in concert with the port, that no umbrage might be taken on either side.

In the beginning of March, Ghilan submitted to the Russian troops. About the same time Ibrahim, Bascha of Erzeroum, was joined by the Beglerbegs of Diarbeck, Trebesonde, and several others, who formed an army of 40,000 men. The Bascha put himself at the head of them, and sent a messenger to Mahommed Kouli Khan, Vali of Georgia, demanding the delivery of the city and castle of Teflis. The Vali wanted neither courage nor experience; but he had very few troops, and the taxes which he had imposed, alienated the affections of the people from him, in the very beginning of his reign. Under these circumstances he submitted to the Ottoman dominion, on condition that the Seraskier would confirm him in his principality. The Turkish deputy promised him this upon oath, and returned to give an account of his negotiation to the general.

Agreeably to this convention, the Turks marched to the walls of Teflis the 12th of June. Mahommed Kouli Khan met the Seraskier with a numerous retinue in due form, and delivered the keys of the town and castle to him. This general received the Vali with great demonstrations of benevolence; and as a mark of honour gave him a vest lined with fable; but as soon as he took possession of the fortress, he ordered him to be arrested, thus confirming a Georgian pro-

verb, "To trust an Ottoman is to lean upon a wave^d." The deposed Khan found means a few days after to escape from prison; and retired into his principality of Caket. In the mean time the port had nominated Baccar, Vachtanga's eldest son, for his successor. This prince was so averse to the new government, that a few months afterwards he went out of Teflis, under pretence of diverting himself by hunting, and voluntarily retired from a place, where he enjoyed only the empty title of sovereign.

In the mean time the Seraskier, encouraged by the reduction of Teflis, cast his eye upon Ganja, and marched his army the autumn following, in order to lay siege to it. He made himself master of the suburb of the Armenians; but the garrison and inhabitants of the town, recovering from their surprize, attacked him in his camp. The Turks, being pressed hard on every side, abandoned their artillery and baggage, and fled with the utmost precipitation: they lost on this occasion 3000 men. The Seraskier, dispirited by this disgrace, retired with the shattered remains of his army to his government of Erzeroum.

The reduction of Georgia had in some measure made the Turks amends for the uneasiness occasioned by the Russians taking possession of Ghilan. The courts of St. Petersburg and Constantinople seemed now to triumph successively at the expence of the fugitive king of Persia. As their jealousy of each other increased with their success, they took such measures as they judged most convenient for their mutual security. The Czar marched fresh troops towards Shirvan; and the grand signior put Azoff, and the other towns on the Russian frontiers, in a posture of defence.

Tæhmas Shah being thus on all sides oppressed, resolved to try his success in negotiation. With this view he confirmed the credentials which his father had given Ismael Beg, as ambassador to the court of St. Petersburg; and nominated another for that of Constantinople. They both set out at the same time. The person appointed for the Ottoman port was detained at Cars; but he dispatched two of his retinue in a secret manner to notify the subject of his embassy. These deputies took the opportunity of the grand signior's coming out of the mosque at the feast of Beiram, to present their memorial to him. They were then introduced to the grand signior and the musti, to whom they delivered their dispatches; the result of which was, that in October following

^d Turkish honour has had a reputation, but most modern writers mention it as an imaginary thing.

ing the Persian ambassador was permitted to come to Constantinople. His commission was, to request the assistance of the Turks against the Afghan rebels. The grand visier being informed that an ambassador had been sent into Russia upon the same errand, not only made it a reason to evade a definitive answer, but reproached Tæhmas for making any such application to a christian power. This behaviour was in some measure owing to the reception which had been given at Constantinople some months before to the envoy of Mir Maghmud. The court seemed desirous at this time to humour the affection which the people shewed to the Afghans; as well as to pursue the projects which they had formed, in consequence of the reduction of Georgia.

Ismael Beg, whom Tæhmas had nominated as ambassador-plenipotentiary to the court of Russia, was more successful. He arrived at St. Petersburg the second of September. The Czar, whose active genius was impatient of delay, fixed the audience for the fifth. This ceremony was performed before the senate, after the following manner: The ambassador, with his retinue, left their robes at the hall-door. He made his entrance, holding up in his hand his master's letter, which, after he had made his harangue, he presented to the Czar. This prince gave it to his chancellor, who laid it upon the table, desiring the ambassador to draw nearer to the throne; which having done, upon his knees, he kissed the hem of the Czar's garment, and afterwards his hand: at the same time the Czar inquired after the king's health. The Persian minister applying this to Shah Hussein, and believing he was dead, made no reply, but shed tears. The chancellor then informed the ambassador, that his majesty's ministers would answer the letter which he had brought; upon which he withdrew to the hall, where he had left his retinue.

Soon after arrived news of the surrender of Baku. The necessity of preserving a communication by land with Ghilan, had determined the Czar to make himself master of that coast; in consequence of which, he had given orders to major-general Matufkin to embark with 3000 men at Astrachan, and the 28th of July they arrived at Baku. The general immediately wrote to the commanding officer, "That
" as the Inhabitants had sued the preceding year for the protection of the emperor his master, tho' his majesty then
" shewed some repugnance to accept of their allegiance, yet
" in consideration of the friendship subsisting between him
" and the king of Persia, and through compassion for them-

“ selves, he had resolved to send a body of troops, with ammunition and provisions; therefore they ought to render themselves worthy of this favour by a ready submission, if they were willing to be considered as loyal subjects, and good citizens.”

In passing through Astrachan, Ismael Beg had left a letter, which was now delivered, exhorting the inhabitants of Baku to a submission; but the governor answered, that he could not admit foreign troops into the town, without the express orders of Shah Tæhmas. As he persisted in this resolution, general Matuskin began to cannonade the town, and employed the two galliots, which he had brought with him for that purpose, in bombarding it. The garrison of Baku was very numerous, and the commandant seemed determined to make an obstinate defence; but on the 7th of August he demanded to capitulate, and sent a deputation of the principal inhabitants to acquaint the general that he would surrender up the town.

This conquest created no difficulty in the negotiation with which Ismael Beg was charged. He was well acquainted with the melancholy situation of his master's affairs, and knew that he could not obtain any succours upon better conditions: he took no notice of the hostilities which he had in some measure authorized by his letter, but solicited the Czar's ministers in so strong a manner, that they signed a treaty of alliance with him the 23d of September, on the following conditions:

I. That the Czar should pacify the troubles of Persia, drive out the Afghans, and re-establish the government.

II. That Tæhmas, as lawful sovereign of that kingdom, should yield in perpetuity to the Russian monarchy, the towns and dependencies of Derbend and Baku, with the provinces of Ghilan, Mazanderan and Astrabad.

III. That he should furnish, at the prices stipulated in this public act, camels and provisions for the Russian troops.

IV. That hereafter there should be full liberty of commerce between both nations.

V. In fine, that this alliance should be mutually defensive.

P A R T VII.
 THE
 REVOLUTIONS of PERSIA,
 FROM THE
 Treaty concluded between the Emperor of
 RUSSIA and TÆHMAS SHAH in 1723,
 TO THE
 DEATH of MIR MAGHMUD
 in 1725.

C H A P. XXVII.

Pretensions of Aman Ola to the crown, compromised. Surrender of Cashan. Death and character of Nazr Ulla. He is succeeded by Zeberdest Khan, who takes and plunders Shirafs,

WHILE Tæhmas was thus obliged to yield to necessity, Maghmud was in danger of being stripped of the sovereignty by the very man who had most contributed to his conquests. We have already mentioned that Aman Ola followed him in this expedition as a confederate, and not as a subject. This general, jealous of the superiority which the partner of his victories had acquired over him, dissembled his resentment in hopes of indemnifying himself by the wealth which he expected to draw from Cashin. It is pretended that Maghmud had consented to his being declared sovereign of that city and its district; but the bad success this general met with in that expedition irritated him so much, that he was hardly recovered of his wounds, when he insisted boldly on Maghmud's sharing with him the treasure and sovereignty annexed to the Persian diadem, pursuant to the compact which he said they had entered into upon their setting out from Kandahar.

Regal power, divided between two persons, is absolutely inconsistent, even in a limited monarchy; and consequently impracticable in despotic governments: as to the treasures, they were necessary to the support of the state. Maghmud therefore could not agree to these proposals; it was his interest however to carry it fair with an experienced general, who had moreover brought a considerable body of troops with him, which would obey only his orders. This circumstance seemed to presage the downfall of their usurped power. Maghmud amused him with different promises; till Aman Ola perceiving that he was trifled with, resolved to keep no further measures. One of Shah Hussein's daughters, whom Maghmud had given him in marriage, contributed to inflame his temper, which was naturally fierce. She reminded him of the perfidy and ambition, of the avarice and cruelty of Maghmud; she made him also sensible of the danger to which his Life was exposed, if he did not immediately remove out of the power of the tyrant; and at length prevailed on him to join his forces to those of Tahmas Shah, in order to drive away the usurper, and divide his spoils between them.

With this intent, towards the end of December, Aman Ola left Isfahan. As soon as he was out of the gates, he put the royal plume upon his turban; and, in order to deceive Maghmud, he took the road to Kandahar. Maghmud did not venture to oppose his march; he was afraid of increasing the number of his enemies; and perhaps was not sorry, though at the expence of part of his army, to be disengaged from a man who had the presumption to declare himself his competitor. But as soon as he heard that this general had altered his rout, he was so affected with a sense of the danger that might ensue, that he set out immediately in pursuit of him with what forces he could collect, ordering the rest of his army to follow him with all possible expedition; and in four days he came up with him.

It was presumed, that Aman Ola would not venture himself again into the power of a man, to whom he had given such subject of offence, but rather decide the quarrel by the sword. Instances of caprice and inconstancy are very frequent among the eastern warriors: as soon as they came in sight, they ran and embraced each other. Whether the remembrance of past friendship stifled all reproaches, and opened their eyes to a mutual interest; or that Aman Ola did not depend on the fidelity of his troops, to measure his strength with that of the young conqueror; these marks of affection

affection were followed by a reconciliation; and Aman Ola was won once more by Maghmud's promises.

This prince artfully soothed the ruling passion of his disgusted friend, and made him the compliment of his own horse: they embraced each other, and renewed their former oaths on the points of their naked sabres. Maghmud sent him back to Isfahan, escorted by a body of horse; with orders to the governor of the city to pay him all the deference he could desire, except granting him his full liberty.

Maghmud having thus prevented the danger of his friend's resentment, obliged the troops belonging to that general to swear allegiance to him, and had the judgment to incorporate them with his own. He then joined the forces under Zeberdest Khan. This general had lately raised his reputation by a new conquest. He blockaded Cashan, the inhabitants of which, intimidated by the taking of Ghulpaigan and Honfar, surrendered by capitulation. The Khan paid a religious regard to his promise, so that there was neither any disorder nor plundering in the town; but it is said that he afterwards massacred a considerable number of those fit to bear arms, in order to secure a conquest, which he had not otherwise sufficient force to garrison.

It was not till after this barbarous execution that Maghmud joined the victorious army: the news he had received from Farfistan, was the cause of this motion. Nazr Ulla, who had been intrusted with the reduction of that province, made himself master of all the towns and villages in his way, without meeting with any resistance. The terror of his name induced them to make a ready submission. Thus he arrived in the neighbourhood of Shirafs, without shedding any blood. Here his fortune changed. In the first attack at the siege of this place, he was wounded by a musket-ball, which put an end to his life. The loss of this general, who had the highest reputation as a soldier, plunged his army into the greatest grief. Of this they gave the most melancholy tokens, by the bloody funeral rites with which they honoured his memory. For after the whole army had marched round his body, with colours trailing on the ground, they obliged their slaves and prisoners to perform the same ceremony, and then sacrificed them at his feet; according to the barbarous superstition which they had learnt of the Indians*. They killed also the finest of his horses, the flesh of which, agreeably to the custom of the Afghans, was divided among the soldiers, in order to make a funeral entertainment.

Nazr

* See Vol. IV. Chap. xvii.

Nazr Ulla was in stature very tall, but ill shaped. The custom he had contracted of keeping one eye shut, procured him the name of the one-eyed lord †, by which he was often distinguished. He was fond of the Armenians, whom he took openly under his protection. The incursions and robberies in which he had been exercised from his youth, had formed him early to military exercise, in which he acquired great reputation, and was esteemed by his own people as a consummate general. His great prudence, and the series of success attending it, made him suspected of having learnt the magic art, ascribed to the Indians. It was perhaps this prejudice that created an extraordinary confidence in his soldiers, who thought him invincible.

He was of a mild and humane temper, behaving towards those who submitted to him, with a strict regard to his word, and with a certain degree of clemency, to which the other rebel chiefs were utter strangers. All nations reverence virtue, tho' it is not always attended with success, nor always the object of vulgar attention. Humanity in a soldier, whose duty calls him into scenes of blood, is an illustrious quality. The good inclinations of this Afghan, tho' of the religion of the Magi, gained him honour even after death. Maghmud erected a stately monument to him, near the burial place of the Armenians. The Afghans looked upon him as a saint, and expressed a high veneration for his memory. This was the more extraordinary, as they could not plead ignorance that he was a worshipper of fire; since there were two priests hired by the sultan, who kept the sacred flame near his tomb.

Maghmud chose Zeberdest Khan to succeed that general; accordingly he ordered him to set out immediately for Shirafs; after which he returned himself with the army to Isfahan, where he arrived towards the end of March, 1724.

As he entered the city, he was struck with surprize and admiration, at an extraordinary event. A woman disguised in man's apparel, seeing his troops upon their march, rode up to them in full gallop, and falling sword in hand upon the first that fell in her way, she is said to have killed about twenty, before she was seized. This woman was a native of Georgia, and possessed the military disposition of that nation in so eminent a degree, that she had formed the design of revenging on the first Afghans she could meet, the death of her husband, who was slain at the bridge Abasabad, when Isfahan was taken. For this purpose, she committed the care of
her

† Kior Sultan.

her effects, and of her two children, to her brother; and without being daunted at the rigor of the season, or the length of the journey, she set out from Georgia in a secret manner, in man's dress, well armed and equipped. She was brought before Maghmud covered with wounds; this prince, upon being informed of her sex, admired her resolution, and gave orders that she should be treated with all the care and attention, which the greatness of her courage deserved^g.

In the mean time, the news of Nazr Ulla's death being spread, some of the cities and towns of Farisistan, which had submitted, took up arms again, as if this single event secured them from any further danger. Zeberdest Khan had therefore some difficulty to join his army, whom he found desirous of revenging the death of their late general. The glory of succeeding a man so much regretted, was a new subject of emulation to him; and indeed he omitted nothing that might contribute to the success of this new enterprize.

The Khan of the province remained in the town: he was a man unpractised in the military art, but loyal and honest; and from a consciousness that he was not possessed of skill sufficient to extricate himself out of such a difficulty, he had by presents and promises engaged Mir Baghir, brother of Abdallah, Vali of Arabia, to come to his assistance. This prince was esteemed a very good general; he repaired to Shiras with as many of his own people as were disposed to follow him; and took upon him the command of the town under the Khan. The walls were in a good condition; the parts most exposed were covered with entrenchments; and frequent sallies from the town had induced the Afghans almost to despair of success; when the Khan was so ill advised as to check the ardour of the garrison, by not permitting them to stir any more from the walls: this was the fault which had occasioned the misfortunes and surrender of Isfahan.

This step was soon followed by the inconveniencies naturally attending it. The ardour of the troops abated; a scarcity of provisions ensued; and the soldiers were so disheartened, as to think only of making their escape, to prevent being starved. The enemy being sensible of the advantage
of

^g Military courage is a virtue much in esteem in the east, among people who live by the sword; but women are no where more defenceless than in Asia. This seems to be a stronger instance of female resentment than that of the Spanish lady, who dug up the body of one who had been false, as a lover, and whom she had caused to be murdered; in order to enjoy the pleasure of tearing his heart in pieces with her teeth.

of such a desertion, favoured it, by granting a free passage. The scarcity increasing, Mir Baghir undertook to save the town, by making a vigorous sally. Accordingly he marched out at the head of 6000 men, who surprized and dispersed the besieging army : but such fortune did not attend him long. Soon after, he endeavoured to re-enter the town with a convoy which he brought with him, but was opposed by a body of troops, who, tho' inferior in number, attacked him with such resolution, that his army was put to flight. This brave Arabian, whose character was the reverse of his brother's, who occasioned the loss of Isfahan, stood his ground with only 200 men, who, imitating his example, died like him, fighting gloriously to the last gasp.

The cutting off so necessary a supply, was not the most considerable advantage which the Afghans reaped from this victory. The country was ravaged, and the neighbouring towns kept so much on their guard, that the scarcity was greater in their camp than in Shirafs ; insomuch that Zeberdest Khan was upon the point of raising the siege, when the taking of the convoy enabled him to wait at his leisure, till the enemy, overcome by famine, would be obliged to implore his mercy. He was not deceived in his expectations ; for Shirafs was soon reduced to a very melancholy situation, numbers of the inhabitants dying with famine ; so that the Khan determined to capitulate. On the 13th of April he sent his brother to treat with the enemy.

This resolution was followed by an easy and imprudent security. The Afghans perceiving that the besieged had neglected their posts, detained the deputy, and made a general assault. The Persians, surprized and disconcerted, made very little resistance. The Afghans put every one they found in arms to the sword ; and this unhappy town was under these dreadful circumstances, when the officers restrained the fury of the soldiers. The massacre being over, the conquerors plundered with their ordinary licentiousness. One remarkable incident is recorded of the punishment of covetousness : some of the soldiers having found in the house of a private man a considerable quantity of corn, which he had concealed in prejudice to the other inhabitants, they tied him to a stake in his granary, where he died with hunger ; revenging the death of many, whom this wretch had sacrificed to his avarice.

Thus one of the most celebrated cities of the east was taken and sacked, after a blockade of near eight months ; the Afghans having despaired to reduce it otherwise than by famine,

mine, confined themselves to their several posts. They lost before it 2000 of the troops of their own nation, and a considerable number of Derghezins. The number of Persians who died by the sword, was not so great as that which perished by famine. Zeberdest Khan exacted no more of the inhabitants by way of tribute, than what they annually paid to the kings of Persia. He then ordered them to collect provisions from all the neighbouring parts, that he might send a supply as soon as possible to Isfahan, where it was greatly wanted.

C H A P. XXVIII.

Zeberdest Khan's expedition against Bender Abassi. Maghmud marches into Cohkilan, and loses great part of his army. Imprudent conduct of Shah Tæhmas towards the Armenians. The Turks take Erivan. The Armenians of Nachivan invite the Turks into their country. Tavis besieged by the Turks, and taken. Siege of Hamadan.

ZEBERDEST Khan was animated by the taking Shirafs, a place of such consequence; and began to meditate new conquests. He had hardly settled the government of that city, when he ordered Hussein Aga, one of the officers of Maghmud's household, with four hundred men, to make an incursion into the southern part of the province. This detachment penetrated without any obstacle as far as Lar, the capital of Laristan, a province formerly governed by its own kings. Hussein Aga plundered the city with his small body of men, but the castle held out, and the governor of it refused to capitulate. The Afghan commander then pushed on as far as Bender Abassi^b. This was the second time during the war that this city was exposed. In January 1722 it was pillaged, without making any resistance, by 4000 Balouches; but upon their attempting to break into the fortresses, where the English and Dutch East India companies had their counting-houses, they were repulsed with considerable loss.

The Afghans succeeded still worse. Upon the first report of their march the inhabitants retired with their most valuable effects: but the Europeans were prepared to give them a warm reception. The Afghans therefore thought proper to accept a supply of provisions, without making any attempt

on

^b Gombroon.

on them. The greatest part of this detachment died: the malignity of the air, and the bad quality of the water not agreeing with them, insomuch that they were reduced within two months to a very small number, who rejoined the army without making any accession by the plunder of this city, to the riches they had amassed in their expedition.

During this interval, the news of the taking of Shirafs having reached Isfahan, the Afghans were animated with fresh ardour. Maghmud resolved to lead them himself in person to new conquests. Accordingly he set out in June with an intent of subduing Cokkilan, a country situate within ten days journey of the capital, towards Bassora¹. His army was near thirty thousand men: so that he had all the reason to promise himself undoubted success; but the event did not answer his expectation. His troops were not only harrassed continually by the Arabs who inhabit the neighbouring country, but also distressed for want of provisions; whilst the air had the most pernicious effects on his soldiers, insomuch that he did not bring half of his men back to Isfahan. His disaster would have been still greater, if Cassin Khan, a Persian, who was possessed of a government in those quarters, had not given him all the assistance in his power.

Maghmud compounded with the Arabs to return back, on condition of being furnished with provisions; but these people perceiving his inability to withstand them, broke their word, and harrassed his army to the greatest degree. Thus was the formidable Maghmud by too great confidence, and the efforts of some bodies of roving Arabs, reduced to the utmost streights. He was so shocked at his losses, that he made his entrance into Isfahan without those honours which it had been customary to pay him on the like occasions. His army being thus discouraged, prudence suggested to him the expedient of distributing fifty thousand tomans² among his troops, to indemnify them for the loss of their baggage, and he employed them the rest of the summer in repairing this accident, as far as the melancholy situation of his affairs admitted.

In this state of weakness and despondency, to which Maghmud was reduced, Tæhmas Shah might have entertained great hopes of recovering the diadem, and taking ample vengeance of the Afghans; but this prince was entangled in inextricable difficulties: forgetting that his imprudent resentments had the preceding year occasioned the revolt of Teflis, he loaded the Armenians with excessive taxes, which were

¹ This is part of Chusilan, whose capital is Ahouas.

² 125,000 l.

were levied with the utmost rigour. So severe a proceeding, contrary to his natural disposition, alienated the affections of these people in the very beginning; and things were soon carried to an extremity. Necessity being without law, he entered some of their principal towns by force, and plundered them, especially such as refused to obey the orders he had sent them to join his troops, tho' by law they were exempted from all military service.

The Armenians of Capan and Chiava, finding they were treated as enemies, took up arms. Tæhmas, who seemed to exert his resolution only where prudence was wanting, intended to reduce them by force; but they gave him so warm a reception, that he became more circumspect, and determined at length to enter into a treaty with them. He gained by gentle measures, what he could not obtain by force; and those people having returned to their duty, gave the greatest proofs of their fidelity. But it was not in the nature of things, that Tæhmas should recover his dominions at this time.

The Turks being jealous of the advantages secured to the Czar by the treaty of St. Petersburg, endeavoured to counterbalance them by their conquests. With this view, they provided for the security of Georgia; built a new fortress near Teflis; and assembled different bodies of troops on the frontiers of the Persian dominions. Abdallah, Basha of Van¹, entered this province the beginning of the year. Mahommed Kouli Khan, the same who had surrendered Teflis, made a stand at the head of a body of troops. The Basha having reinforced the garrisons of the several towns in Georgia, marched against him with 35000 men, and soon put him to flight. After this, in February, he penetrated into Aderbeitzan, and laid siege to Khoi, which held out two months, and was then taken by storm, and plundered.

Arifie Achmed, Basha of Diarbekir, whom the port had nominated Seraskier, now projected a more important expedition. This general passed the Aras the end of June, and entered the province of Erivan with an army of above 30,000 men. In order to intimidate the inhabitants, he treated them with great cruelty. The towns and villages upon his march, were entirely sacked; and he made slaves of above 20,000 persons of both sexes. After these barbarous hostilities,

¹ His surname was Kouprul Oglou, or the son of Kouproli. This family is descended from the grand visier Kouproli Mahommed Basha, son of a country parson in the neighbourhood of Belgrade in Albania. This is almost the only family in Turkey that has a proper name.

lities, in the middle of the same month he arrived before Eri-
van, the capital of the province.

This city, the capital of Armenia, is distant about six leagues from mount Ararat ^m. In 1635 it was situated a mile from the spot where it now stands. Shah Seffie having taken it from the Turks, made choice of the present situation. The castle is built on a steep rock, inaccessible towards the west; and on the other sides it is defended by a triple wall of brick. At the foot of this rock runs the river Zengui, which descends from the lake Sevan ⁿ, and mixes its waters three leagues lower with the Aras. The Khan of the province resided in the castle. The town is encompassed by a double wall, and abounds more in gardens and vineyards than houses. The adjacent country is a large fertile plain, terminated by the mountains, of which Ararat makes a part; and the whole forms a most delightful prospect. This advantage, however, is counterbalanced by great inconveniencies. The water and fruit are very unwholesome; the country is subject to frequent earthquakes; their winters, notwithstanding their latitude, are long and severe; and they have excessive heats in summer. During the months of July and August, most of the inhabitants leave their houses, and retreat to breathe a more temperate air in the mountains. It is computed, that in the heat of summer there are often 20,000 tents in their neighbourhood; for not only the Kourds travel thus far northward, but likewise the people from the extremity of Caldæa, come hither with their flocks.

The Ottoman army had with them a numerous artillery, with which they soon made a breach in the walls. The Seraskier then attempted to storm the town; and though his troops behaved with great courage, they were as bravely repulsed by the garrison. They met with the same reception at three general assaults; and the air being in some measure infected with the number of dead bodies; the Turkish general desired a truce of three days, in order to bury the dead.

In the interim, the Bascha of Cutaya joined the army. This determined the Seraskier to try his fortune once more. The 10th of September he ordered the fourth general assault; but with so little success, that he suffered more on this occasion than in any of the former attacks. The Turks having lost near 20,000 men by the sword, and the unwholesomeness of the air, were discouraged. They had indeed received frequent

^m I have already had occasion to mention, that according to the tradition of the Armenians the ark rested on this mountain.

ⁿ This lake is about 70 miles distant northward of the city.

frequent succours; and their bombs had reduced great part of the town into ruins; but the Persians as well as the Armenians; actuated by the double motive of rage and self-preservation; still shewed the same courage and resolution. The besiegers, almost exhausted with the fatigue of so long a siege; threatened openly to retire; when the arrival of a reinforcement of fresh troops from Egypt; changed the scene. Sarl Mustafa, Bascha of Erzeroum, also brought a considerable reinforcement with him towards the end of the month; so that the murmurings of the soldiers began to cease, and they thought of nothing further than bringing this enterprize to a happy conclusion.

The Khan, who commanded the town, began to be intimidated at the sight of such large reinforcements. The garrison was already in distress for provisions; and a great number of the soldiers and inhabitants had perished with hunger, sickness, or the sword. They expected no succours from Tæhmas, and were reduced, for want of lead, to new-cast the few balls that were remaining, and those which they found in the breaches and ditches, by putting a pea in them; an expedient which might conceal their want of this kind of ammunition; but yet it diminished the weight of the ball, which must consequently do less execution. These circumstances; and the pressing solicitations of his brother, whom the Turks had taken prisoner near the Aras, determined the Khan to enter into a capitulation.

The first of October he sent deputies to the Turkish camp, and after some difficulties it was agreed, that the governor and the garrison should be safely conducted with all their effects to the frontiers of Karabagh: that the inhabitants of the castle, and those who had retired thither during the siege, but had no share in defending the town, should quit it and retire to the old Erivan: that none of them should be molested, either in their persons or effects: and that the town, the castle with the artillery, and ammunitions, should be immediately surrendered to the grand signior.

These articles were punctually executed. The Bascha of Kara Hissar conducted the garrison to the frontier, from whence the Khan proceeded to Ahr, where Tæhmas then resided.

During this interval, the troops under the command of the Bascha of Van, were not idle. This general having defeated Mahommed Kouli Khan, as already related, and taken

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• A district south of the Aras, full of inaccessible mountains. De Lisle has a place called Carachaban.

the fortress of Khoi, had formed a design upon Tavis. As he had not troops sufficient to attempt a place of that importance, he acquainted the court; and the Baschas of Caramenia and Aleppo, with some others were ordered to join his army.

Towards the beginning of August, he received a deputation from the Armenians of Nacivian^p. The inhabitants began to despair of succours from the Persians, and were afraid of the cruelties of the Turks; the subject therefore of their deputation was, to recommend the conquest of their country to the Bascha. Upon this he ordered the chiefs^q of Kourdistan to march thither with 12,000 men, and to these he joined a detachment of 1000 Turks, commanded by Ibrahim Aga. These troops no sooner appeared in the province, than the Armenians rose up in arms. The Persians were driven from Nacivian and Ordoubad^r. This expedition, together with the taking of Erivan, reduced the greatest part of Armenia Major under the Turkish yoke.

In the mean while, the Bascha of Van marched with an army of twenty five thousand men towards Tavis. Though a great part of this town had been destroyed by the earthquake already mentioned, it was still one of the finest cities in the east; but it had neither walls nor artillery, so that like antient Sparta, its only bulwark consisted in the number and strength of its inhabitants. The Turks, crowding upon one another, had already made themselves masters of a whole quarter of the town, when the inhabitants flocking from all parts, barricadoed the streets by which the enemy had entered; and their communication with the main body of the army being cut off, four thousand of their men were surrounded, and cut in pieces.

The Bascha was not discouraged by this disaster: he made several attacks, but his troops were constantly repulsed. He began to waver in his resolution, when his spies informed him, that the inhabitants were preparing to attack him the next night in his entrenchments. Finding the valour of his troops unequal to his design, he ordered fires to be made in his camp as usual; and the 21st of September in the night he marched off silently, leaving his tents standing, the better to deceive the enemy. Some hours afterwards the inhabitants

^p Nacivian signifies the first made. The Armenians pretend it was the first city that was built after the deluge.

^q Begs.

^r This place is noted for its trade in silken and other manufactures.

tants came out of the city, to the number of twenty thousand : finding that the Turkish army was retired, they followed them till the next day at noon, but could not come up with them. In revenge they massacred not only all the stragglers that fell in their way, but likewise the sick and wounded, which the enemy had been obliged to leave to their discretion.

The Ottoman army, considerably reduced, retired to Tassou, a town situate within twenty leagues of Tavis, on the north bank of the lake Chahi. Here the Turkish general added to his disgrace, by attempting to be revenged of the Persians for the gallant defence they had made. Though the neighbouring villages had submitted without making any resistance, yet he carried the women and children with him as slaves, and put the men to the sword. The inhabitants of Tavis were so provoked at this cruelty, that they took the resolution of pursuing him, and preventing his retreat. The Bascha having notice of their approach, marched out at the head of eight thousand men ; most of these were killed in the engagement, and he retired to Khoi with the few who saved themselves by flight.

These were not the only armies which the Turks had in Persia. Hassan, Bascha of Bagdat, and Achmed his son, Bascha of Bassora, entered this country with the troops belonging to their respective governments, and laid siege to Hamadan. Tachmas, encouraged by what had passed before Tavis, sent part of his troops under the command of Flagella Khan, one of his principal officers, to the relief of this town. But the success did not answer his expectations : his general was defeated, and put to flight.

The Ottoman Army being thus free, continued the operations of the siege without interruption. In the mean time, the enemy defended themselves with the same resolution ; and it was now two months since the opening of the trenches, when a German renegado sprung a mine, of which he had the direction. The effect determined the fate of the besieged. The Turks mounted the breach with loud shouts, and carried all before them : a slaughter of the inhabitants ensued, till some of the Turkish generals, moved by a sense of humanity, facilitated the escape of great numbers, by giving them a passage out of one of the gates of the town.

The taking of Erivan and Hamadan, and the repulse of the Bascha of Van, concluded the campaign on the side of the Turks. The army under the Seraskier, together with the remaining forces of the Bascha of Van, were reduced to forty

thousand men, including the garrisons of Georgia. The troops of Egypt and the Kourds separated, and took up their winter quarters in Erivan, Nacfivan, and Ordoubad. Those of Bagdat and Bassora, retired to their own country, after leaving a sufficient garrison in Hamadan, to secure their conquest.

C H A P. XXIX.

Rejoicings at Constantinople. The port is dissatisfied with the conduct of Peter the Great. The conferences renewed by the mediation of the French minister to the Ottoman port. Conclusion of the treaty between the Czar and the port. Articles of that treaty.

THE Turks having extended their conquests so far as Hamadan; this event seemed to quiet the minds of the people, already uneasy concerning the success of a war hardly commenced. This circumstance added to the satisfaction of the ministers of the port. The public rejoicings lasted nine days, and were scarce finished, when they were ordered to be renewed on the following occasion. Mahomed Kouli Khan, who still thirsted after revenge, had passed the Kura near Gori, and laid siege to the fort by which that little city is defended. He was carrying on the attack with great vigour, when Regeb, Bascha of Teflis, marched with 6000 men to the relief of the place: this, together with the defection of the principal Georgians, who were gained by the port, obliged the Khan to retire with great precipitation. The Turks came up with him as he was passing the river; and he lost a thousand men in the action. He then retired with the rest of his troops into the mountains.

The French ambassador^f thought proper to distinguish himself, upon the occasion of these rejoicings, for the accomplishment of one of the articles of the treaty, concluded by the mediation of the court of France. To explain this, we must trace matters somewhat back.

It has been already mentioned, that the port being informed of the success of Ismael Beg, the Persian ambassador at the court of St. Petersburg, pushed on her conquests in Persia without reserve. Whether the Czar slighted the resentment of the port, on account of this treaty; it was scarce concluded, when he sent copies of it to his resident Neplueoff,

^f The marquis of Bonac.

pluecoff, but without any instructions to him or to the French embassador ; at the same time, he made it public in all the courts of Europe. This caused a general surprize at Constantinople. Neither the embassador, nor the Russian resident, expected such an event. They were greatly confounded, whilst their enemies laid hold of those circumstances to decry their conduct. This was not difficult to effect. The Turkish commissaries having opened the conference in the beginning of January this year, with bitter reproaches, declared, in the name of the grand signior, that such a prince as Tæhmas, wandering from place to place, without succour or support, could not with any validity consent to the dismembering of his dominions ; therefore such engagements were void : that the grand signior would not suffer any foreign power to extend his dominion in Persia, consequently, that the only method to preserve the peace subsisting between the two empires, was to relinquish all pretensions derived from this treaty, and likewise to abandon the conquests made on the borders of the Caspian sea.

After so explicit a declaration, the turkish commissaries broke off the conferences abruptly. It was thought the port would declare war against the Czar, and send the Russian resident to the castle of the seven towers. This minister having no instructions, refused to yield to the solicitations of the French embassador, to enter into a negotiation ; which served to increase the disgust of the Turkish ministers ; so that the storm seemed to be gathering, when the embassador ventured to take the consequence of negotiating upon himself.

With this view he waited on the ministers of the port, and entered into a close conference with them ; in which he reconciled all matters so well, that they were soon agreed upon almost every article. The grand visier, who pressed the conclusion of this affair under-hand, found it very difficult to make the divan come into it ; especially as the point was to enter into an alliance with a christian power, in order to share the dominions of a Mahommedan prince. There was no time to lose : they must either conclude the treaty entered upon with Russia, or stop the progress of that power, by declaring war against her. Ibrahim, the grand visier laid this before the divan, which he convened in the name of the em-

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peror

* This relation being made by a Frenchman belonging to the embassador's ministry, we must allow for some partialities as to the abilities of his master.

peror his master. After very warm debates, the divan declared for the continuation of the peace: upon which, the French ambassador dispatched monsieur D'Alion *, a relation of his, to the court of Russia, with the preliminaries of the treaty; who arrived at Mosco the middle of March.

The first article in his commission was, that Shah Tæhmas should be obliged to send a solemn embassy to Constantinople, to beg of the grand signior that he would set limits to his conquests, and consent, as far as was consistent with the glory and interests of his highness, to the execution of the treaty concluded the year before at St. Petersburg. The others contained a project of accommodation, in regard to the limits of the conquests made, or which were to be made in Persia, by either of these contracting powers.

These preliminaries having been agreed to, the Russian resident received new instructions, and the 19th of May the conferences were renewed. The visier had made it an established rule, to live in peace with the christian powers, as necessary to his security. How favourable soever his disposition might have been, there were great obstacles to surmount, before they could come to a conclusion of the treaty. Dagistan, and part of Shirvan, inhabited by Mahommedans of the sect of the Sunnis, were to continue under the dominion of the Czar: moreover, this monarch required that the port should acknowledge Tæhmas as king of Persia: that she should join her forces to those of Russia, in order to put this prince in possession of the throne: and lastly, that she should engage to receive neither proposals nor ministers from Magh-mud, or any other usurper. These articles were contrary to their religion, which the Mahommedans consider as the basis and primum mobile of political government.

Part of these difficulties were removed in a long conference, which the grand visier had the 5th of July with the French ambassador; and the general conferences being renewed, the several articles of the treaty were agreed to. They were six in number, preceded by a preamble, setting forth in a summary way, the cession which Shah Tæhmas made to the Czar, of the provinces situated on the borders of the Caspian Sea.

The first article determines, that the barrier betwixt Russia and Turkey shall be regulated by a line, to begin within
twenty-

* This person was minister at the court of St. Petersburg, for some time after the marquis De Chetardie.

twenty-two leagues of the Caspian Sea on the confines of Dagistan, to pass within the like distance of Derbend, and afterwards within seven leagues of the coast, including Shamakie, after which it is to be drawn in a direct line to the conflux of the Kura and the Aras. It is likewise stipulated, that the contracting parties shall nominate commissaries, and desire the mediation of the court of France with regard to the regulation of those limits. That either party shall be free to erect forts upon their own territories, on condition of giving notice thereof to each other, and of building them at the distance of three leagues at least from their frontier.

The second, that Shamakie, the capital of Shirvan, shall not be fortified, nor receive a Turkish garrison; and that if some unforeseen accident, such as a revolt, should oblige this monarch to send any troops thither, they shall acquaint the Russian officers before they passed the Kura, and retire from thence as soon as the troubles are appeased. The grand signior promises, that his armies shall not pass this river in any part of Georgia, without giving notice of the reasons of such motion to the officers appointed by the Czar, along the coast of the Caspian Sea.

The third establishes the barrier which is to separate Turkey from Persia. This line commences where the other finishes, that is, at the conflux of the Kura and Aras; it passes within three miles of the walls of Ardeville towards Tavis, and from thence to Hamadan, which city, together with the territory belonging to it, falls to the grand signior's share; after which it turns off towards Khermansha, the new conquest of this monarch, where it terminates.

By the fourth, the Czar promises the grand signior, to employ his mediation, that the provinces assigned him in the preceding article, shall be voluntarily surrendered to him, or recovered for him, by a joint effort. This article concludes with a reciprocal guaranty of those provinces of Persia, which these monarchs adjudged to themselves.

These powers declare, that if Shah Tæhmas should refuse to agree to the treaty, they will jointly endeavour to conquer the respective places assigned to each; after which, the rest of the kingdom shall be entirely given up, without any foreign dependence, into the hands of Shah Tæhmas.

In the fifth, the grand signior engages, as soon as the places assigned him by the third article shall be voluntarily delivered up, to acknowledge Tæhmas for king of Persia; to give him full security of his restoration, and afford him all proper assistance: that in case the usurpers should by any hostility re-

duce him to the necessity of declaring war against them, he will join his forces to those of Russia, in order to place this prince on the throne of his ancestors.

The sixth article declares, that if Tæhmas should refuse to conform to the treaty, the contracting powers, after having made themselves masters of the provinces assigned to them, shall appease the disturbances of Persia, and restore this kingdom to the Persian most deserving of it, towards whom they shall conduct themselves as they have done towards the kings his predecessors. That they shall not in any manner interfere in the government of his dominions, but jointly take every measure necessary for his tranquillity, without listening to any proposal on the part of Mir Maghmud.

This treaty was signed the eighth of July, and the ratification of the Czar being arrived, the exchange was solemnly made some days after in the apartment of the grand visier. The peace being thus confirmed, the Khan of the Crim Tartars, and the generals of the Ottoman troops, who were on the frontier of the Ukrain, received orders to retire, the one to Crim Tartary, and the others towards the Danube.

In the mean time Tæhmas, who was at Ardeville, received an ambassador from the Czar; but this minister had so little reason to be satisfied, that he returned home without taking leave of this prince.

Tæhmas had lately sent an ambassador to the Ottoman port, who was arrested at Erzeroum: at first they treated him in a manner suitable to his character ^w, but soon after he was confined as a close prisoner in the castle, and his effects were confiscated.

The unhappy Shah Tæhmas saw his country thus torn from him: the Persian monarchy was become a prey. He soon learnt the tenour of the treaty concluded between the Russians and the Turks. The passive conduct of his minister Ismael Beg ^x gave him great offence; but in his circumstances what less was to be expected? He immediately ordered the Czar's resident to withdraw from his court: but this mark of resentment did not hinder the Russian monarch from ordering the ambassador-extraordinary, whom he had sent to Tæhmas, to continue his journey. It is presumed that Peter the Great would have been contented with Ghilan only, could he have thus prevented the progress of the Turks, and restored

^w Sixty dollars a day were ordered for his maintenance.

^x He remained at Astrachan, and was there still in 1744, and had a guard appointed him, with a daily allowance, not chusing to trust himself at home.

stored Tæhmas to his dominions, in which the Russians were more sincere than the Turks.

C H A P. XXX.

Mir Maghmud raises new troops. A caravan arrives from Kandahar. He marches an army, and lays siege to Yezd; but is obliged to raise it. Ashreff returns. Disposition of the Afghans in his favour. Uneasiness of Maghmud upon that account. He undertakes a religious penance. Reports concerning Seffie Myrza.

WHILST this partition of the Persian dominions was negotiating, Maghmud was employed in repairing the breach, which the expedition of Cokhilar had made in his troops. With this view, he enlisted a great number of Derghezins: he also levied some new companies of Turks; and knowing how important a matter it was to conceal his weakness, he not only renewed the prohibition of corresponding by letters, but moreover made it death for any stranger that should attempt to leave the town ^y.

Things were thus situated, when the caravan which he expected, arrived at Isfahan. It was not near so numerous as that of the preceding year; owing, in a great measure, to the complaints of some of the Afghans, who at their return to Kandahar, accused their sovereign of avarice, and a partial neglect of those who had performed the bravest actions. Maghmud, however, perceiving he had now as strong an army as that which had raised him to the throne, was ambitious of effacing the memory of his late disgrace.

After some time, he resolved to lay siege to Yezd, which he had in vain endeavoured to take upon his march to Isfahan. The inhabitants of this city had lately routed a reinforcement of 2000 men, who were coming to him from Kandahar. The necessity of securing a communication with that province, as well as the desire of retrieving the reputation of his arms, engaged him to turn the greatest part of his forces that way.

Towards the end of December, he set out upon this expedition, with an army of 18,000 men. Such a number of troops, together with a good train of artillery, which he carried with him, and the correspondence he held with the Persees, who inhabit a particular quarter of the town, seemed to

^y This confined the merchants during these troubles.

to render him confident of success; but Providence had otherwise ordained. The inhabitants of Yezd discovered the treachery of their fellow-citizens, and put them to the sword. Having taken this step, they laid the country waste for several leagues round, destroying, or carrying off every thing that might be of any service to the enemy. After this they prepared to defend themselves.

This precaution of the inhabitants, obliged Maghmud to push on the siege with the utmost vigour. His artillery was scarce mounted in battery, when he ordered a general assault. The Afghans attacked the town on every side with great bravery, in confidence of the promises of the Perses; but they were received with so much resolution and courage, that they were soon convinced there was no dependence to be made on any assistance from that quarter.

This assault was followed by several others, which proved equally unsuccessful. In the mean time, the severity of the season very much distressed the Afghans; they were also straitened for provisions; which reduced them to the necessity of raising the siege a second time, or of weakening the army considerably, by sending out large detachments to some distance, in search of provisions. Maghmud determined upon the latter; but he had soon reason to repent his choice. The garrison had been increased by a number of people who had fled for shelter from the open country; finding the Afghans weakened, they fell suddenly upon their principal quarters, and confounded them by so brisk and unexpected an attack; insomuch that they put several parties of them to flight, and killed near 3000 men, before the main body of the army could be assembled. Maghmud himself was in danger of being surrounded, and obliged to abandon his baggage and artillery, and save himself by flight.

The uneasiness occasioned by this new disgrace, was augmented by the mutinous disposition of the army. The soldiers declared loudly, that their defeat was a consequence of the change of manners introduced into the nation; that they were upon the brink of being ruined by that very effeminacy and luxury, which had destroyed their enemies; that Maghmud was already Persian in his apparel, and his luxurious diet, but still more so by the excessive number of concubines with which he had filled his harram; adding, that no further hopes of success remained, so long as they were governed by a chief, who, not satisfied with adopting the manners of the conquered, affected likewise to espouse their sentiments in matters of religion. This last reproach was
owing

owing to some words which Maghmud had let drop, perhaps with a design to vex the Turks, or to render himself more agreeable to the Persians.

Mean while the danger increased by the impunity of these murmurings. Ashreff was also come back with the last caravan from Kandahar : and the army, who had been always extremely fond of him, now behaved in such a manner, as plainly shewed they thought him the fittest to reign. He had retreated only to avoid the jealous eye of Maghmud ; and the expressions of esteem and affection of the Afghan army, had been the chief inducements of his return from Kandahar. While he remained there, he lived intirely in the country, in pursuit of rural pleasures, and his own domestic affairs. But such tranquility was not his lot ; he seemed born to move in a higher, tho' less happy sphere. During his absence, the soldiers expressed a great desire for his return. The principal officers considered the dangers to which the army would be exposed, if Maghmud, who had but indifferent health, should die without male issue capable of holding the reins of government ; thus, in some measure, they obliged this prince to recall Ashreff, in order to declare him his successor to the empire.

Ashreff having quitted his solitude, Maghmud was obliged to dissemble his jealousy, and entertained him for some days with all the appearances of the most tender friendship ; but he was no sooner informed of the murmurings of the troops, than he ordered Ashreff to lodge in the palace, where he was strictly guarded. This prudent step checked the soldiers ; but did not make the sultan easy in his mind. The disgrace he lately met with in Cokhilan, and before Yezd, had weakened his power and authority. He began to be in as great fear of the mutiny of his troops, as of the revolt of the Persians.

To extricate himself in this situation, required more steadiness and virtue than Maghmud was master of. This Prince, who had been so bold in projecting, and so brave in executing, was frightened at the thought of a danger to which he had not been accustomed. Under these circumstances, he tried to obtain from heaven that light and assistance, which he no longer expected from those who had been the followers of his fortunes. A design of this nature, however commendable in itself, seemed in his condition to argue the troubled state and weakness of his mind, rather than a sense of religion.

With

With this intent, Maghmud undertook to perform the spiritual exercises², which the Indian Mahommedans, who are more addicted to them than those of other countries, have introduced into Kandahar. This superstitious practice is observed, by shutting themselves up for fourteen or fifteen days in a place where no light enters; the only nourishment they take, is a little bread and water at sun-set. During this retreat, they employ their time in repeating incessantly with a strong guttural voice the word Hou, by which they denote one of the attributes of the deity. These continual cries, and the agitations of the body with which they are attended, naturally unhinge the whole frame. When by fasting and darkness the brain is distempered, they fancy they see spectres, and hear voices. Thus they take pains to confirm the very distemper of mind which puts them on such trials. They presume to pry into the secrets of providence, from an opinion, that during this penance, the devil is compelled by the agency of a superior power, to let them into the knowledge of futurity.

Such was the painful exercise which Maghmud 1725. undertook in January this year, and for this purpose he chose a subterraneous vault. In the beginning of the next month, when he came forth, he was so pale, disfigured, and emaciated, that they hardly knew him. But this was not the worst effect of his devotion: solitude, often dangerous to a melancholy turn of thought, had, under the circumstances of his inquietude, and the strangeness of the penance, impaired his reason. He became restless and suspicious; often starting, as if the very persons most attached to his interest, had an intent to destroy him. He was in one of these fits, when it was rumoured in Isfahan, that Seffie Myrza, son of Shah Hussein, had found means to make his escape from the seraglio, and had retired towards Turkey. Whether the Persians spread this alarm in order to intimidate the tyrant, or himself caused it to be reported; he made it a pretext to cover a new scene of the most execrable barbarity.

² They call it the Riadhlat.

C H A P. XXXI.

Cruelty of Maghmud in murdering Shah Hussein's children. Numerous offspring, and great voluptuousness of Shah Hussein. Maghmud falls into a delirium. Ceremony of the Armenian priests in reading the red gospel over him. Conspiracy of the Afghans against him, in favour of Ashreff. Ashreff is elected sultan. Miserable death of Maghmud. Character of this prince.

HITHERTO Maghmud, amidst all his cruelties, had not imbrued his hands in the blood of his ancient sovereigns. Many princes of Shah Hussein's family were confined with him in the seraglio, as the sad companions of his captivity: among whom were several brothers, three uncles, and seven nephews of that unfortunate monarch.

The tyrant's heart being now rent with anxiety for the support of his declining power, regardless of his more declining health, and approach to eternity, he resolved to sacrifice all the royal family, except Hussein Shah. The seventh of February was the day appointed for the execution of this bloody purpose. These victims to cruelty and a disordered mind, were assembled in the palace-yard with their hands tied behind their backs. The tyrant, attended only by a few of his most intimate confidants, began himself this horrid butchery with his sabre. There were only two sons of Shah Hussein remaining, when this unfortunate prince, hearing their cries, came running to the place of slaughter. These princes, the eldest of whom was only five years of age, flung themselves into the arms of their father. Nothing but the tenderness of a parent could have supported this prince at the sight of so sad a spectacle: he bathed his children with his tears, and put himself in the way to receive the fatal stroke. Maghmud, now drunk with slaughter, stepped forward to murder these royal infants, tho' sheltered in their father's bosom: the Shah stretched out his arm, and received the blow. Here the horrid scene was ended. At the sight of blood gushing from the wound of a king, and a man of whom this tyrant had been used to think with some reverence, heaven stopped his murdering hand. As these children were yet of so tender an age, and incapable of giving umbrage, he determined to leave them to their parent, now oppressed with such an accumulated load of misfortunes.

It

It is not agreed what number of princes were murdered on this occasion, but they are reckoned above an hundred. It is easy to reconcile their being yet more numerous, if we attend to the circumstances of eastern courts. Few men have carried their voluptuousness, however permitted by a particular faith, further than Shah Hussein. The year 1701, was called in Persia the year of virgins^a. This prince then ordered a search to be made thro' the whole extent of his dominions, for all the young virgins of distinguished beauty: and the commissioners appointed for this inquiry, brought all those whom they thought worthy of the harram. The governors of the provinces, knowing their master's predominant passion, paid their courts in the most prevailing manner, even till the siege of Isfahan, by sending him the finest girls in their province. This strong passion, or rather appetite for the sex, was sufficient to render the royal family extremely numerous; insomuch, that in the space of a month, thirty cradles were carried into the seraglio. Besides this monarch being more humane than any of his predecessors, put none of the royal blood to death^b. All those princes, excepting Tæhmas and the two children already mentioned, perished on that day.

This bloody execution, instead of dispelling the fears of Maghmud, only contributed to increase the terrors with which he was tormented. His mind was perpetually agitated with the most frightful ideas; and the remorse of this last act of barbarity gave him no repose. His intellects, which had been so much weakened by the austerity of his spiritual retreat, appeared to be yet more impaired; and besides this, he had an insupportable pain in his bowels. The most skillful physicians of the court, endeavoured in vain to restore him to his senses. They then had recourse to a religious remedy.

In cases of the like nature, the Armenians had been wont to engage one of their priests to read over the head of the patient, what they call the red gospel^c. This custom was received not only by those christians, but also by the greatest part of the Mahommedans of the country, who together with

^a Kifverân.

^b It was common in later times to kill them all, insomuch that I never heard that Nadir had any children alive, at least no males, except his two sons Riza Koulr Myrza and Nefr Ali Myrza, who were born long before Nadir was made king.

^c Probably some passage relating to the miracles of our Saviour. Exorcising without the use of the scriptures, it is pretended, is common in Portugal.

with the Armenians affirmed, that several Persians affected with the same degree of Madness as Maghmud, had been cured by this means : so that they resolved to try to work a miracle. In the beginning of April, the clergy of Julfa being dressed in their sacerdotal habits, and with wax tapers lighted, went in solemn procession to the palace^d, where they were received with great respect. They passed through the apartment between two rows of courtiers and guards, whose modest countenance, and profound silence, expressed such a reverence for these priests, as could hardly be expected from persons of their religion. After the ceremony was performed, the clergy retired in the same order to Julfa, attended by a great number of the lords of the court.

In one of the lucid intervals of his disorder, Maghmud having been informed of the relief which the Armenians had endeavoured to give him, he sent them two thousand tomans in specie^e, and as much in effects, promising to restore the remainder of what he had exacted from them, if he recovered his health. He did the same in regard to the Dutch and the Indians. A sense of the danger he was in, having excited some sentiments of piety in his breast, he recommended himself also to the prayers of those different nations. After some hours of ease, he relapsed into a more terrible condition : his body was covered with leprosy, his flesh rotted, and seemed to fall from his bones.

Such was the frightful condition of Maghmud, when news was brought that Shah Tæhmas had advanced at the head of a body of troops, and defeated a party of Afghans near Koom, as they were marching towards Casbin, under the command of their general Seidal. It was not merely the desire of taking advantage of the present conjunctures, that drew the Persian army so near to Isfahan. Since the beginning of Maghmud's illness, Ashreff had been no longer watched with the same strictness ; so that he found means to enter into a correspondence with Tæhmas. As soon as he found that things were ripe for his purpose, he sent him word that now was the time for him to ascend the throne of his

^d The late king of Portugal, at different times, caused the several bodies of the clergy in and about Lisbon, to walk in procession through his chamber ; and a book was published, giving an account of the manner and ceremonies of each fraternity. Whether the king's life was protracted by any miraculous interposition, is a point about which the Romish clergy will be most ready to determine.

his ancestors; that he needed only to advance towards Isfahan, where every thing was in confusion by the sickness of Maghmud; that upon the first rumour of his approach, his friends would join him in a body; and that this step would induce part of the rebels to return to their duty, and put it out of the power of the rest to withstand him.

Ashreff had imparted this design to the Persian lords, who had been spared at the time of the massacre, with a design to ensnare them, and it was by their intervention that this correspondence was carried on. Accordingly they wrote to acquaint Tæhmas, that the only condition Ashreff insisted upon for himself and his party, was, that their lives, their liberty, and their effects should be sacred: thus the treaty met with no difficulty. Tæhmas sent him a deed †, in which he engaged under the most sacred oaths, to observe his word inviolably: after which, he advanced as far as Koom, where meeting a body of Afghans commanded by Seidal, he put them to flight.

This new disgrace greatly alarmed the rebels. So many defeats began to weaken that reputation of bravery and success, in which their security chiefly consisted; it behoved them to stop the progress of a prince, who, taking advantage of the present conjunctures, threatened to drive them from Isfahan; but the confusion occasioned by Maghmud's illness, was an insuperable obstacle to the execution of any military projects. These circumstances renewed their former ideas of revolting; hence their whole discourse soon turned on the necessity of choosing another master.

Aman Ola, tho' considered as prime-minister and generalissimo of the sultan, became the most active of all the conspirators. He was hardly returned to Isfahan, when he perceived that he was strictly watched; which affronted him so extremely, that when Maghmud returned from his expedition into Cokhilan, he obstinately refused to go and meet him. That which confirmed his opinion of being an object of jealousy, excited his revenge also. It was not long before this time, that he was insulted to a great degree. He went out upon a common occasion, with a numerous retinue, to perform his devotions at his brother's tomb: Maghmud, apprehensive lest under such pretexts he should escape a second time, sent one of his officers, with orders to pierce
with

† This is called Nachlathema, probably resembling the anathema of the Hebrews.

with his lance the horse on which the general was mounted^s.

Aman Ola was too proud to put up with such an affront. As soon as he returned, he took the opportunity of killing several fine horses belonging to Maghmud's stables; so that this prince was obliged to come himself in person to appease him. At this interview, they seemed to be again reconciled.

The general however meditated the sultan's destruction, and it was impossible for him to find a better opportunity. His opinion determined the generality of the Afghans; so that the council and the army unanimously agreed on the necessity of chusing a new sovereign. This choice, according to nearness of blood, should have fallen on Hussein Khan, brother of Maghmud, who was at that time in Kandahar, and commanded in the name of the sultan: but affairs were so critically circumstanced, that they could not wait till his arrival from so distant a country, had the army been disposed to it. Ashreff was the most beloved, and was now chosen with an unanimous consent.

The moment this election was proclaimed, the troops ran to their arms, in order to take the new king out of custody. The Abdolles, who guarded him, disputed the entrance for some time, but at length yielded.

Ashreff, being at liberty, was proclaimed king of Persia by the Afghans on the 22d of April. This prince, under the specious pretence of revenging the death of his father Mir Abdalla, would not accept the ensigns of royalty, till they brought him the head of their late sultan. The miserable Maghmud, who had hardly many hours to live, suffered the execution of this sentence, without knowing the additional misfortune into which he was fallen^b.

Thus perished, at the early age of twenty-seven years, this destroyer of one of the fairest monarchies of Asia, leaving the world a sad monument of human misery in the character

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acter

^s This seems to be a capricious action, yet such as the genius of the people, and the temper of Maghmud renders credible.

^b It is said that such a horrid frenzy had seized him, that he tore his own body with his teeth; that this rage continued upon him for seven days, and he was just ready to expire with the wounds which he had given himself, when they put an end to his life and misery. The Jesuits and ecclesiastics, who have had the greatest share in collecting this account, might aggravate this part of the story; but as Providence does, I believe, interpose sometimes to punish such murderers, we may suppose that he was marked out as an example of divine vengeance.

rafter of a prince and a conqueror. Nature had refused him those external advantages, by which great men are sometimes distinguished. He was middle-sized and clumsy; his neck was so short, that his head seemed to grow to his shoulders; he had a broad face, a flat nose, and his beard was thin, and of a red colour; his looks were wild, and his countenance austere and disagreeable; his eyes, which were blue, and a little squinting, were generally down-cast, like a man absorbed in deep thought.

He had made it a rule from his earliest youth, to supply by habit and custom his natural unfitness for bodily exercises. In this he succeeded so well, that very few excelled him either in horsemanship, or in the use of the lance. He applied himself to military exercises; and that he might not lose his dexterity in wielding the sabre, he often caused sheep to be brought to him with their feet tied, and after they had been hung up, he cut off their heads at a blow¹.

To these talents, which were common to the generality of his nation, he joined some virtues more worthy of a sovereign. Tho' his soldiers in their discontent reproached him with an immoderate love of women, which seems to prove how far prejudices may transport men, he was very chaste; and is reported to have had only one wife, to whom he was ever constant. He slept little; and in his campaigns suffered hardships with great indifference. He was so vigilant, as often to visit the centinels in the night, not only in the field, but also in Isfahan. In labour he was indefatigable, in danger intrepid; and what is properly the characteristic of the man of honour more than of the conqueror, he was a strict observer of his word towards those for whom he ever professed a friendship: he shewed a great regard for Aman Ola upon that account, even when he was convinced that this general was contriving his ruin.

These qualities procured him respect, but he was too much feared to be beloved. His soldiers accused him of a severity in military discipline; they charged him also with avarice, and that he had deprived them of the booty for which they had bravely encountered the greatest dangers: but above all they could not forgive his having said in the first emotions of his resentment after the defeat of Yezd, that he wished they were as great beggars as when they first came into Persia, that they might fight as bravely as they did then. They could perhaps with more reason have reproached him with

¹ He is represented also so strong, as to cut the body of a sheep in two at a stroke; but these stories are generally exaggerated.

with want of conduct, which was the chief cause of his mis-
 carrying. To this might be added his cruelty to his ene-
 mies; his want of fortitude under his disgraces; and if suc-
 cess had not in some measure justified his enterprize of con-
 quering Isfahan, it would have appeared rash and extrava-
 gant.

Such was the man, whom posterity will hardly number
 among the eastern heroes, tho' the blood he spilt, and the
 mischiefs he created, will give him a rank among the rava-
 gers of the earth. He sat only two years and a half on the
 throne of Persia: but this short time was too long for his re-
 putation as a conqueror, and he died very seasonably for the
 interest of his nation. That inconsiderate temerity, which
 constituted the chief part of his character, was fit only for
 making conquests; to secure them, other qualifications were
 necessary, which he did not possess.

Peace concluded between the Persians and the
 Turks in 1727.
 CHAP. XXXII.
 Character of Akbar: his spirit, and his conduct in
 the Persian war. The progress of the Persians into the
 provinces of India, and the manner in which they were
 repulsed. The manner in which the Persians were
 repulsed from the province of Bengal.

THE qualifications wanted in Maghmud, were for the
 most part, united in the person of Akbar, who was
 justly celebrated as the greatest person to whom the throne
 of Persia was ever entrusted. He was naturally brave, courageous, active, and vigorous.
 He had been trained up to his profession from his earliest years, and
 having acquired the necessary qualifications of a warrior, he had
 been at the same time instructed in the art of government, and in the
 being a just and upright ruler: among the soldiers, he was
 also called for a consummate general. Upon the whole,
 may be said, that in Akbar, were joined the talents and
 virtues which are necessary to a great monarch and con-

P A R T VIII.
 THE
 REVOLUTIONS of PERSIA,
 FROM THE
 Accession of ASHREFF to the throne
 of PERSIA in 1725,
 TILL THE
 Peace concluded between this Prince and the
 TURKS in 1727.

C H A P. XXXII.

Character of Ashreff: his hypocrisy and artful behaviour to Shah Hufflein. The princes of the blood, who had been murdered, buried at Koom. Ashreff punishes the conspirators who placed him on the throne. His behaviour towards the mother of Maghmud. His cruelty to his own brother. He endeavours to render himself popular, by the mildness of his administration in general.

THE qualifications wanting in Maghmud, were for the most part united in the person of Ashreff, who was justly considered as the properest person to possess the throne. He was naturally sober, courageous, active, and vigilant. He had been inured to hardships from his earliest life; and having acquired the accomplishments of a statesman, he had learnt at the same time the art of dissimulation, and affected being moderate and upright: among the eastern warriors he also passed for a consummate general. Upon the whole it may be said, that in Ashreff were joined the valour and military virtues of Mir Maghmud, to the moderation and cunning of Mir Vais.

The resistance which the partisans of Ashreff met with at the royal palace, served as a pretext for this new sultan to remove some of his enemies. The very same day he caused the guards of the late sultan to be put to the sword; and the ministers and intimate confidants of that prince underwent the same fate.

The Koular Agaffi *, named Almas, was too much attached to Maghmud's interest to expect he should be excepted out of the number of the proscribed; therefore he endeavoured to save himself by flight. He was overtaken, and brought back to Isfahan, where they put him to the rack, in hopes of obliging him to discover the treasures which he was supposed to have concealed. The unfortunate Almas bore these torments with great constancy; but as soon as the executioners left him, he slew his wife, and then stabbed himself, to avoid the repetition of such unworthy and cruel treatment.

Of all the officers whom Maghmud favoured with his confidence, none had done so much honour to his choice as Almas. He never used the ascendant which he had over his master, to any other purpose, than to soften the ferocity of his natural disposition, and divert him from barbarous resolutions. He had a soul generous, compassionate, and liberal, of which he gave repeated instances. Far from endeavouring to accumulate riches, he even refused to accept of presents, tho' this method of acquiring wealth is authorized by the practice of Asia. The Europeans considered him as their protector, and joined the Afghans and the Persians in bewailing his death. Even Ashreff himself was moved at it, or affected to appear so, in order to avoid the censure, which the fate of a man so generally esteemed must have thrown upon him in the beginning of his reign.

The first impressions in disfavour of Ashreff, were in some measure effaced by his subsequent conduct. He had hardly received the ensigns of royalty, when he waited on Shah Hussein, and expatiating on the ill consequences of Maghmud's ambition, pressed him to re-ascend the throne, which none but himself could lawfully fill. This monarch, naturally of a timid disposition, was rendered more circumspect by his present situation, and quickly saw into the artifice of this new Tiberius. He therefore made answer, "That he
" had too deep a respect for the decrees of Providence,
" which had obliged him to abdicate the supreme power, to
" accept of such offers, though suggested by an unexampled

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" generosity;

* Chief of the slaves.

“generosity; that since he had descended from the throne
 “of his ancestors, heaven had opened his eyes in regard to
 “the vanity of human grandeur; and therefore he now pre-
 “ferred the sweets of an obscure retreat, to the splendor of
 “his former condition, in which he had always experienced
 “an alloy of bitterness and sorrow.” He took this occa-
 sion however to complain of the little regard which Magh-
 mud shewed to his personal wants, and of the great cruelty
 exercised towards his family; then begging the new sultan to
 be kinder to him, he invited him, after the example of his
 predecessor, to marry one of the princesses his daughters.

Shah Hussein having thus solicited his enemy to possess his
 throne, without hesitation granted him a formal act of abdi-
 cation. Ashreff then took the title of king, and to convince
 Shah Hussein of the regard he paid to his representations, he
 allowed him fifty tomans^m a week for his household; where-
 as, in the former reign, no more had been paid monthly.
 He likewise gave him the direction of the buildings, which
 were carrying on within the inclosure of the palace; and af-
 ter repudiating his wife, he married one of the princesses his
 daughters, whom Maghmud had left in the harram, toge-
 ther with other females of the royal blood.

To render the memory of his predecessor odious, as well
 as to alleviate the affliction of the unfortunate Hussein, Ash-
 reff caused the dead bodies of the princes, who were still left
 above ground in the court where they had been massacred,
 to be put into coffins, and conveyed at his own expenceⁿ,
 with a funeral pomp to Koom, the antient burying place of
 the Persian kings. With this melancholy caravan, he sent
 some rich carpets to decorate the mausoleums, and a thou-
 sand tomans to be distributed among the dervises, and poor
 of the place. The caravan was received at the gates of the
 palace by great numbers of people, who attended the proces-
 sion, with all the tokens of the deepest sorrow, to the further
 end of the suburbs: after which, it was conveyed under an
 escort of Afghans to Koom, where the scene of lamentation
 was again renewed.

The officer who commanded at Koom, deposited the
 bodies in the mosque, and shewed a great regard to the
 Afghan officer who had attended the convoy; but in
 compliance with the Persian custom of abusing the mes-
 sengers

^m 125 l.

ⁿ They were carried on camels.

sengers of bad news, a Georgian of the company was very ill treated ^o.

Ashreff had not been eight days upon the throne, when he shewed by a bold stroke of politics, that he looked upon his authority as perfectly established. He ordered those who were concerned in the conspiracy which placed him on the throne, to be arrested; and affecting the appearance of justice in preference to gratitude, he confiscated all their estates, put some of them to death, and imprisoned the rest.

Under the colour of justice, this prince thus endeavoured to establish his own security; but he had also a further aim. By this blow, he removed several of the principal officers, whose turbulent and enterprising spirit rendered them objects of jealousy; he likewise filled his coffers with the riches which the conspirators had acquired since the taking of Isfahan.

The proud Aman Ola, who had pretended to share the throne with Maghmud, was among the number of those who perished; the consideration of his daring intrepidity, as well as of his riches, hastened his fate. He had been generalissimo and prime minister of the usurper, and these employments afforded him an opportunity of glutting his avarice; so that his treasures were hardly inferior to those of the crown. This will not appear improbable, if it be considered that the very presents which he received at his entering upon the ministry, amounted to nine thousand tomans ^p, and that he obtained the confiscated estates of most of the Persian lords who had been massacred under the last reign.

An Indian of Cabul, formerly governor of the late sultan, and afterwards raised to the dignity of high priest ^q, was, next to Aman Ola, the richest man at court. By his prudence, and the strength of his genius, he passed for a second Zoroaster among the credulous vulgar, who attributed the greatest part of the success of the war to his sorcery. The respect which Maghmud paid him, increased his credit; for this prince used to do nothing without his advice, continuing to behave towards him in the same respectful manner as when he was under his tuition: he always advanced half way to meet him, with his arms crossed on his breast; he then kissed

U 4

fed

^o Some accounts say his eyes were cut out, which seems to be so unjust and barbarous an action, as hardly to be credible, since this person was in no degree faulty.

^p 22,500 l.

^q The person whom the Turks call Musti, and the Persians Mullah Bashi, the Afghans nominate Mlangi.

sed his hands, and never attempted to take his place till this Indian was first seated.

From these circumstances, there was no room to believe that the Miangi was concerned in the conspiracy; he was not indeed suspected of any such design; but his great possessions, so much out of character for a priest, rendered him guilty. Ashreff however went no farther than the confiscating of his estate; he even promised to send him back by the first opportunity to Kandahar, with as much money as he should have occasion for, to spend the remainder of his days in ease and quiet.

The Reputation which Zeberdest Khan had acquired by the siege of Shirass, and his prudent conduct in the government of that city, which had been conferred on him by Maghmud, exempted him also in some degree from the fate of the rest. His person however was seized, and his goods confiscated: but the sultan being sensible of his moderation and military abilities, sent him soon after to his government, with a liberty of taking twenty thousand tomans out of his own confiscated estate.

This general was the only one that had his liberty restored to him; and of all the persons of note either in the army or at court, none but Seidal, the same whom Shah Tæhmas had lately routed, and Mahommed Nischan, grand master of the ceremonies, remained unmolested, either in their persons or effects. The latter had been always upon terms of friendship with Ashreff, and was the chief person who solicited his return from Kandahar.

Maghmud's mother had stooped to marry a simple officer of the guards, and could not be prevailed upon to quit her own country, till her nephew Ashreff was upon the point of setting out for Isfahan. The desire of seeing her son in all the splendor of his regal power, then determined her to undertake the journey. The Persians, so much accustomed to pomp and shew, were greatly surprized to see the widow of the famous Mir Vais, and the mother of their sovereign, mounted on one of the camels of the caravan, and entering the capital of a kingdom, subject to her son, without attendants.

The entreaties which this lady had used, to prevail on Ashreff to return to Isfahan, were not the only marks of her affection towards him, it was chiefly at her sollicitation that Maghmud spared his life. Gratitude for benefits received, seldom makes such deep impressions, as to prevent our resentments, when those benefits cease. On the contrary,
among

among men of base minds, it adds a poignancy to real or imaginary injuries. No sooner was Ashreff seated on the throne, than he caused this lady to be confined a whole night in the palace-yard, where the dead bodies of the princes, massacred by her son, still lay above-ground. It was presumed this punishment was inflicted for her having refused to solicit his releasement. He did not however intend to carry his resentment farther: for after this wanton penance, he treated her with kindness, and in a manner suitable to her rank, promising to send her with a considerable treasure to Kandahar.

The severity, which Ashreff shewed to his younger brother, was much greater. This prince, being apprehensive that according to the custom of Persia he should be confined in the seraglio, tried to make his escape to Kandahar. Being taken he was deprived of his sight, and then shut up in the very place to which he had shewn so great an aversion. A son of Maghmud, yet in his cradle, was treated in the same manner; and as the mother, who was then pregnant, survived the sultan her husband only eight days, it was presumed that this princess was poisoned by the orders of the new king.

Such a series of cruelty, did not alienate the minds of the people. They looked upon the misfortune of those princes, with the massacre of the guards, ministers, and favourites of Maghmud, as an act of prudence, authorized by custom. The justice which appeared in punishing the conspirators, made this conduct pass for an act of generosity. Thus the new sultan secured his power, and took possession of almost all the riches that had been amassed in the pillaging of Isfahan, without forfeiting his reputation for moderation and equity.

Ashreff was indeed ambitious of the affection, not only of his own nation, but likewise of the Persians. For this purpose, immediately upon his accession to the throne, he distributed money among his soldiers; and established so exact a discipline, that the shops were all kept open by his orders, from the very evening of Maghmud's death.

He imposed no new tax, neither on the natives nor foreigners, but contented himself with causing the sums which Maghmud had restored during his illness, to be brought back to the exchequer; pretending, that as this prince was then delirious, he was incapable of making any such donations.

C H A P. XXXIII.

Ashreff endeavours to obtain the acknowledgment of his sovereignty in Kandahar. He forms a design of seizing the person of Shah Tæhmas^c; who makes his escape into Mazanderan. Ashreff takes Koom. He massacres the Persian lords, who had disclosed his design upon Tæhmas.

ASHREFF having thus settled affairs in the capital, began to establish his authority in the more distant parts of the empire. His first care was to obtain an acknowledgment of his sovereignty in the kingdom of Kandahar. With this view, he privately sent several officers with orders to join all his party in the country, in order to excite some disturbance, by means of which they might seize or destroy Hussein Khan, the brother of the late usurper Maghmud. What steps those emissaries took on this occasion are not known; but it is certain that the attempt proved abortive.

Nor did he succeed better in a scheme of greater importance. He had hardly passed from the prison to the throne, when this sudden change of fortune induced him to avail himself of the correspondence into which he had entered with Shah Tæhmas, to make a vigorous effort to seize the person of his competitor. For this end, as he could not impose on the father by an offer of the diadem, he sent a magnificent embassy to the son, making almost the same proposals. The deputies had orders to explain to him what had passed relating to this subject; to persuade him that their master persisted in these sentiments; and that he desired a place might be appointed for an interview, to regulate their respective interests, so that they might jointly engage in such measures as were most suitable to re-establish peace and good order in the empire. These deputies were charged with a present for Tæhmas, of ten beautiful horses richly caparisoned, like those which the kings of Persia usually ride.

At the same time, the artful Ashreff dispatched circular letters to every place, which acknowledged the authority of Tæhmas, to notify his pacific measures to the commanding officers, and to assure them that the Afghans would commit no act of hostility before this interview.

While

^c Tæhmas is called Shah and prince indifferently; he had taken the name of Shah, tho' his regal authority can hardly be said to have been established.

While the ambassadors were upon the road, Tæhmas not knowing of the death of Maghmud, was advanced as far as Cashan. Here he met with Seidal, who flattering himself with the hopes of revenge, had marched with a more numerous body of forces than he had with him at his former defeat. These two armies attacked each other with great vigour ; but fortune having declared a second time against the Afghans, they were compelled to give way, and at length were totally routed.

Ashreff however determined to pursue his political schemes. The Persian lords, of whom we have made mention, ventured to write jointly to Tæhmas, informing him of the death of the usurper, and of what had passed since that time at Isfahan. And as they were apprehensive, that the real motive of the proposed interview was to draw this prince into a snare, they recommended to him to be upon his guard.

Unluckily for Tæhmas, the bearer of this letter was stopped by some of the Afghans that were retreating after the engagement, and carried before Seidal ; this general secured him, and upon his arrival at Isfahan, delivered him into the hands of Ashreff, together with the letters he had found upon him.

In the mean while, the ambassador sent by Ashreff returned with an answer, that Tæhmas, who had retired towards Casbin, had chosen the plains of Varami[†] for the interview. Ashreff having received this intelligence, set out immediately with a body of 12000 men ; and arrived first at the place of assignation.

Tæhmas was advancing, on the first of August, without any mistrust, with no more than 3000 men ; when he received advice, that Ashreff was followed by a much greater number of troops than they had mutually agreed to take for their escort. This intelligence having opened Tæhmas's eyes, he considered what measures to pursue. He had no reason to doubt of the superior number of the Afghans ; but the desire of being revenged of their perfidy, and the confidence he had acquired by his late victories, almost tempted him to try the fortune of a battle.

The troops he had with him, were of two different sorts, Persians^u and Khajars. The latter, who were the most numerous, insisted, that in consideration of the services which they had already rendered, and still were disposed to render, the prince would promise, that in case of success, the Athemat Doulet should be always chosen from their body.

[†] This place is between Koom and Tæhiran. ^u Kezelbachs.

dy. The Kezélbachs opposed such an innovation. This dispute, which seemed to be very ill timed, divided this little army into two opposite factions. Tæhmas perceived that his authority was too feeble to quash the disturbance, and therefore resolved to retreat. But curiosity seeming to prevail over fear, he kept only a thousand men with him, and ordered one of his general officers to march with the other two thousand, to reconnoitre the rebels. Amur Aslan Khan ^w, his general, had soon demonstrative proofs of what he was sent to discover. The Afghans having already passed the limits agreed upon, were in full march; and the number and disposition of their troops plainly shewed that their design was to surround the Shah. The Khan perceiving their intention, dispatched some horsemen to acquaint this prince, that nothing but a speedy flight could save him from the treachery of the enemy.

This advice arrived at the very interval that Ashreff, having been informed by his spies of the place where this prince then was, had detached a body of two thousand five hundred men, with orders to make a long winding, and cut off the prince's retreat. Tæhmas perceiving the danger into which his credulity had engaged him, abandoned his troops, and fled to Tæhiran, attended only by two hundred men.

Amur Aslan Khan, who was soon hemmed in by the Afghans, put himself in a posture of defence. The engagement was obstinate: this brave general twice repulsed his enemies, but at length gave way to numbers; he was in the utmost danger of being crushed, when the approach of night preserved him, and as many of his soldiers as could save themselves by flight, and the favour of the neighbouring mountains. In a few days he arrived at Tæhiran.

Tæhmas, who had retired thither, being apprehensive lest the enemy should follow him, continued his march with great expedition towards Mazanderan. The ruggedness of the mountains, which surround this province, has often rendered it the azylum of the Persian kings: here this prince took shelter, followed by his general Amur Aslan Khan, and those whose horses could bear the fatigue of so precipitate a march.

The prudence of this conduct was soon proved by the event, Ashreff, being persuaded that Tæhmas was still at Tæhiran, resolved to surprize him before he could have time to remove from thence. With this intent, he compelled the
peasants

^w The man by whose orders the British factory was pillaged in Reshd in 1748.

peasants to serve him as guides, and soon appeared with his army before the walls of the town. Upon discovery that Tæhmas was fled, he ordered his troops to attack the place ; but the besieged behaved so well, that he was obliged to abandon his enterprize.

Being greatly irritated at his disappointment, and the laborious march he had made in vain, he directed his course southward towards Sava, which surrendered by capitulation. He afterwards marched to Koom, a city of great importance, and before which he must in all probability have miscarried, had the inhabitants been prepared for his reception ; but the want of provisions obliged them to capitulate, after a siege of eight days. The sultan more politic than his predecessor, observed the conditions of his treaties very strictly. By the reduction of Koom, he became master of twenty pieces of cannon, and three elephants. He also found some treasure belonging to Tæhmas, together with the wife, and part of the court of this prince. However, his fortune here did not compensate for the failure of his plot : and he returned to Isfahan greatly vexed at his disappointment, and uneasy at the accounts he now received of the new enterprizes of the Ottoman court.

The apprehension of being charged with cruelty, which had rendered the memory of his predecessor so odious, was the only motive which had induced the sultan to spare the lives of the authors of the letter already mentioned ; and though this had been intercepted, it was presumed that others of the same nature might have raised a suspicion of his designs. Now he was returned, he thought it essential to his preservation to exterminate this remnant of the nobility ; especially, as he would be ever subject to their treasonable correspondence. Accordingly he assembled them at his country-palace of Ferhabad, under pretence of a hunting match ; and having convicted them of holding a correspondence with his enemies, he condemned them to be beheaded ; which sentence was executed upon the spot.

C H A P. XXXIV.

Death of Peter the Great. Deplorable state of the Persian monarchy. The Turks take Tavriss and Ganja. Achmed Bascha marches an army, and takes possession of Loristan. Division among the Bactiaris. The Vali of Loristan makes an incursion into the territory of Bagdat.

THE conquests which the Turks had made the preceding year, and the indolence into which the Russians seemed to have fallen, with respect to Persia, gave the port a superiority, at which these new allies began to take umbrage. The inconveniencies which the Turks apprehend in waging war against the Afghans, of the sect of Sunni, and the very name of the emperor of Russia, kept the Turks in the resolution of adhering to their engagements, when they received advice of the death of that monarch. General Romanzoff*, envoy extraordinary of Russia for the ratification of the treaty, and commissary for regulating the limits in Persia, was sensible of the difficulties which this accident would create in the execution of his commission. However, he kept his own counsel, and endeavoured to persuade the Turks, that the empress Catharine had adopted such measures, as would prevent the death of his much lamented master from making any alteration in the system of affairs in the Russian empire.

The grand visier pretended to be convinced of the truth of what he said; and declared that the intention of the grand signior was to conform exactly to the engagements, which he had entered into with the deceased monarch; and therefore, he would immediately dispatch the commissaries, who were to regulate the limits upon the spot.

This minister, nevertheless, under the pretence of putting the port in possession of the provinces, which were fallen to her share by the partition treaty, had no other view than to extend the frontiers of the Ottoman empire. For this purpose, he made extraordinary preparations, that the armies which were to act this year against Persia, might be in a condition of making new conquests.

This distressed monarchy was thus a prey to several different enemies at one and the same time. The port had stripped her of Georgia, almost of all Armenia, and part of Aderbeitzan. The Czar had made himself master of the western coast

* I am not sure that he was at this time a general, tho' he was so afterwards.

coast of the Caspian, except Shamakie, which was in the hands of the Lesgees. Khorasan, Kherman, Kandahar, and the governments of Isfahan and Shiras, were in the power of the Afghans or their associates. The authority of Shah Tâhmas was acknowledged only in Mazanderan, Astrabad, and some few places of Irac Agemi. The rest of the provinces which had not openly revolted, either despised the orders of this prince, or formed independent armies, which attacked indiscriminately the Russians, the Turks, and the Afghans.

These troubles soon reached some of the provinces lately conquered by the Turks. The sovereign^y of the Lesgees, who had put himself under the protection of the port, shook off this new yoke, and attacked Hahdgee Daoud, who held Shamakie under the Ottoman dominion. The province of Shirvan was thus divided between these two parties, and the Shemkall, who had submitted to the authority of the Russian emperor, pillaged at large.

Whilst the Lesgees gave proof of their inconstancy, the Janissaries of the garrison of Erivan, mutinied against Arifi Achmed. In consequence of this revolt, they plundered his palace, and the grand signior's chest. This general was wounded in the fray, and saved himself by flight.

This insurrection was not however attended with those consequences, which might naturally be apprehended. The troops soon repented of the violences they had committed, and returned to their duty. They recalled their general; they sacrificed the authors of the disorder; and brought him home in triumph. The port, however, always disposed to shew a particular regard to the Janissaries, appointed Arifi Achmed governor of Erivan; but gave the command of the army to Savi Mustapha, Basha of Erzeroum.

The campaign was opened in May, and Abderraham Beg, son of Abdallah Kouproli, Basha of Van, gained some advantages over the Persians, on the side of Tavis. After which, he made himself master of the city of Marand, and of the fortress of Zonous, without any resistance.

About this time, Latif Khan, a nephew of Shah Hussein, upon the credit of his astrologers, appeared before Hamadan with some troops, and according to their prediction he entered the town, but in a different manner from what he expected; for he was carried off by a detachment belonging to the garrison, and led into the city as a prisoner of war.

These
? Oufmai.

These advantages were followed by conquests of greater importance. The port, not having yet succeeded against Tavis, determined to send a sufficient number of troops to reduce that place, where the number of the inhabitants fit to bear arms was very large, and who, from a generous resolution of defending themselves to the last extremity, had sent their families and most valuable effects into the mountains of Ghilan. The command of the army designed against this city was given to Abdallah Kouproli, Bascha of Van: eleven thousand Tartars, who passed over into Asia, by the way of Constantinople, were ordered to join him; and also the Beglerbeg of Natolia, with the troops of his government. This general having collected a body of seventy thousand men, did not think it necessary to wait for these reinforcements; but put himself at the head of his army, and appeared before this great city the thirtieth of July.

The Persian general did not wait within ruinous walls, but took the field as soon as the Turks appeared in sight. His army consisted chiefly of the inhabitants, who understood the use of arms, but had not been accustomed to military discipline; however, they determined to force their enemies to an engagement, before they had time to entrench themselves.

The Bascha saw into their design: as soon as he perceived that the number of those who had marched out of the town amounted to twenty or thirty thousand men, he fell upon them with the fury of an enraged enemy, in resentment of what had passed the preceding year. The Persians stood their ground; and fresh succours continually pouring in, they fought on both sides with equal bravery till night, when the Persians being routed on every side, flung themselves in the utmost confusion into the town.

The Turks were so eager in the pursuit, that they entered pell-mell with them, where the fight was renewed again with incredible obstinacy. The inhabitants had thrown up intrenchments in the nine different quarters, of which this great city is composed, and defended themselves with the same bravery and resolution, which they had hitherto displayed on all occasions². The Turks were four days and nights before they made themselves masters of seven of those entrenchments, notwithstanding they made repeated assaults: at length, on the third of August, about twenty thousand

² The taking of Tavis, as related by the Turks, seems to be exaggerated with regard to the number and bravery of the Persians, as if they meant by this circumstance to render the conquest the more distinguished.

men, who had retired to the two last entrenchments, finding themselves unable to hold out any longer, offered to capitulate; in consequence of which, they were permitted to retire to Ardeville, with what effects they could carry along with them.

Few sieges have been so bloody as this. The Persians lost near thirty thousand men, and the Turks about twenty thousand; among whom were Osman Basha of Ourfa, who commanded the right wing of the army, the Basha of Carmania, and many other officers of distinction.

The news of so important a conquest, was an agreeable surprize to the grand signior; and the more, as it was hardly believed that Abdallah Kouproli had as yet undertaken the siege. Soon after, the fortress of Lore surrendered to Savi Mustafa. The Basha of Bagdat made himself master of several small towns, situated within a few days journey of Hamadan, in the road to the capital.

Nothing more was wanting to complete the prosperity of the Ottoman court, than to be revenged of the affront which one of her generals had received before the walls of Ganja in 1723. Savi Mustafa, who had conquered Lore, was charged with this new expedition. Towards the end of August, he besieged the place with an army of forty thousand men, and after two days resistance, the commanding officer surrendered by capitulation.

Savi Mustafa then marched into Shirvan, in hopes to subdue the Lesgees; but he did not succeed in this expedition: for the weather setting in very sharp, his soldiers deserted in such numbers, that he was obliged to retire. To make amends for this disappointment, Ahr submitted voluntarily to Abdallah Basha, who confirmed the governor in his office.

Whilst this general and Savi Mustafa were carrying on their conquests in the northern provinces, a third army was ordered by the port to force their way to Isfahan. This was commanded by Achmed, now Basha of Bagdat, who availing himself of the present circumstances, had entered Loristan, and was advancing towards Horomabad, capital^b of the country.

Ali Merdan Khan, Vali of this province, was in no condition to make head against the enemy, for all his troops did not exceed fifteen thousand men: he therefore retired into

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Chusistan.

^a These are called Assitan, Geangere, Firouzabad, places which I do not find in any map, so imperfect are these with respect to Persia.

^b De L'isle calls the capital by the same name as the province, viz. Loristan.

Chufistan. His example was followed by the inhabitants of Horomabad, infomuch that when Achmed appeared before this town, he found it intirely abandoned. He entered without resistance, and with the same facility subdued the rest of the province.

In the mean while, the Basha of Mosul made incursions into the country of the Baſtiaris, with a body of troops subject to the orders of Achmed. These people are divided into two tribes, one called Chahar Ling, and the other Esh Ling; they pretend, that under Constantine the Great they embraced the christian religion, which they have since renounced. They live all the year in tents. It is said, that the Baſtiaris joined to the Lorians, would have been able to raise the siege of Isfahan, in the late revolution by the Afghans, if the antipathy which reigns between these two neighbouring people, had not prevented their acting in concert upon that important occasion: this spirit of dissention brought on the disgrace of both nations. We have seen how the Vali of Loristan abandoned his country upon the approach of the Turks. Seffie, Khan of the Baſtiaris, took a less prudent step, tho' in appearance more generous: he marched with all the troops he could collect to meet the enemy; the fortune of the day was for a long while dubious; but the Persians at length gave way to numbers, and saved themselves by flight.

After this victory, the Basha of Mosul advanced within four and twenty leagues of Isfahan; and would doubtless have approached nearer, if he had not met with the advanced posts of the Afghans on the road, against whom, as there was no declaration of war, he did not presume to commit any act of hostility. The Baſtiaris, who were retired with their flocks into the mountains, sought for an opportunity to revenge their defeat; and harrassed the Turks by frequent and sudden attacks. The Basha, unaccustomed to this method of fighting, was more disposed to retreat than pursue his victory,

e Ahouas seems to be the proper name of the capital of this country, if it is neighbouring to Loristan; tho' in Chap. 17. Honfar near Isfahan is represented as the capital. Baſtiaria is a country, which does not appear in maps under that name. It is sometimes confounded with the antient Baſtria, a country quite remote, bordering on Independent Tartary, on the eastern side of the Caspian Sea. De L'isle has a Baſtriani to the north of Georgia. We seem to be left pretty much in the dark with respect to the countries bordering on Arabia; but this in question may probably be meant of that country, of which Ahouas is the capital, according to De L'isle.

victory, when he was informed that the Vali of Loristan, tho' unable to stand against the Turkish army, carried the war into their country, by which means he soon obliged them to abandon this province. The Khans of Ahouas and Sufter, convinced of the facility of plundering a country, which by the Basha's excursions was left defenceless, joined him, and formed an army of near 20,000 men. They entered the territories of Bagdat, and spread terror and desolation over all the country, as far as the capital. The two daughters of the Vali, who fought by his side at the battle of Gulnabad, were induced by their filial duty and military genius to attend their father in this expedition; as they had also done in a late incursion towards Bassora, from whence their father returned loaded with a considerable booty.

The prudent conduct of the Vali produced the effect which he expected. As soon as Achmed Basha heard that the enemy were ravaging his government, he sent orders to the Basha of Mosul to re-join his army, and left the Vali at liberty to return home by another rout. The Turks lost a great number of men in this expedition: all the advantage they reaped from it, was the empty glory of having marched within three days journey of Isfahan.

C H A P. XXXV.

The Russians uneasy at the conquests made by the Turks. Success of the Russian arms in Persia. The Turks evade settling the limits of their conquests with the Russian resident. Ashreff sends an ambassador to the port. Character of this minister. He is admitted to an audience of the grand visier. His conferences with the Turkish ministers.

THE rapidity of these conquests gave great uneasiness to the Russian ministers. Since the taking of Tavis, the grand signior affected less condescension towards that court; and now the important successes of the last campaign, together with the slow progress of these new allies, greatly diminished the regard which had been shewn them before the death of the Russian emperor.

The inaction of the Russians in Persia, was owing to the circumstances of the court of St. Petersburg. There was some reason to fear, that the Throne was not so securely established, as to venture upon the pursuit of conquests in Asia, by which nothing could be gained; and which, it is probable, were never meant on any other account than to

check the Turks. And as for the Swedes and other neighbouring powers, being no longer restrained by the reputation which the Czar had acquired, they might be the more disposed to seize the first favourable opportunity to renew or form pretensions; for which sovereigns are never without reasons.

The Russians, however, during this time had obtained some advantage in Persia. Matufkin, one of their lieutenant-generals, having been informed, that the former visier of Reshd had built a fort on the confines of Ghilan towards Mazanderan, with a design of molesting his foragers; he sent a body of troops thither in the month of June, and drove the enemy into Mazanderan.

The visier afterwards assembled his forces, and marched in order to fight the enemy; but the Russian infantry soon put them to flight. The demolition of the fort, and the taking of Lahijan*, were the fruits of this victory. The Shamkall of Tarkou, having submitted with reluctance to the yoke imposed on him by the Czar, engaged some of the neighbouring princes in his quarrel: he took the field at the head of an army, but soon had reason to repent this step; for a body of Russians attacked him the twenty-sixth of September, defeated, and drove him into the mountains. Tarkou, and several villages belonging to its dependency, were pillaged and burnt; and his allies lost on this occasion one of their princes, with four of their chiefs.

But these advantages could enter into no comparison with the conquest made by the Turks, who being now become masters of the several provinces adjudged to them by the partition treaty, reproached the Russians for keeping on the defensive, when, according to the treaty, they ought to have acted with vigour, in order to drive the Afghans out of Persia.

Romanzoff, the Russian minister at the port, was too expert a politician not to foresee the uneasiness he should be exposed to: he therefore solicited to go and settle upon the spot the respective limits. At length he had a conference upon this subject, when the Reys Effendi represented, that the season was too far advanced; and moreover, that as the principal articles of the partition treaty were to be performed in Shirvan, it would be requisite to give time to Savi Mustafa to subdue the people of that province, who had lately blockaded Shamakie. Thus the general Romanzoff had the mortification to see his journey postponed till the next year.

The

* See Vol. I. Chap. 49.

The port, not chusing to carry things to extremity, affected a condescension towards the Russians. The inhabitants of Ardeville had sent deputies to Abdallah Basha, soliciting the protection of the grand signior. The Turkish general knowing that this city was beyond the limits prescribed by the treaty, would not send any troops thither without orders. The grand visier communicated this affair to the envoy and resident of Russia, assuring them that these proposals should be rejected. This appearance of sincerity, already contradicted by the invasion of Loristan and other conquests, did not last long. Abdallah Basha received secret orders, in consequence of which he took possession of Ardeville, as it were provisionally, and under a pretence that the rebels had a design upon it. Ouroumi, a city in the neighbourhood of Tavriss, had lately imitated the same example, by submitting voluntarily to the Turks. The irregularity of this proceeding, occasioned fresh complaints. The Russians alledged moreover, that the port had committed a new violation of the treaty, by receiving an ambassador from the rebel Afghans.

Ashreff was so terrified at the progress of the Ottoman arms, that he addressed a manifesto to the inhabitants of Mi-ana, and some other frontier towns, exhorting them to submit to his dominion; after which, he attempted to reconcile by treaty, what he could hardly obtain in the field. The negotiation was committed to Abdul Aziz Khan an Afghan, who from a simple mule-driver, had, by his courage and resolution, attained to the posts of colonel and commandant of Julfa. He set out from Isfahan in September; but having been detained twenty days at Heromabad by Achmed Basha, and twelve at Hamadan, he did not reach Scutari till the twentieth of January this year. [1726.]

The arrival of this ambassador, induced the Ottoman court to believe, that the Afghans, intimidated by the success of the Turkish arms in the last campaign, would acknowledge the grand signior as Imam, and sue for peace at any rate. However, it was determined in council, that this minister should be received only as a simple messenger, deputed by a prince of the same religion as the Turks. Abdul Aziz expected an audience as an ambassador from a king of the sect of the Sunnis; but perceiving that the court did not intend to acknowledge him in any public character, he pretended to be ill, and desired to be removed to Constantinople.

X 3

The supreme head, both in spirituals and temporals, of the Mahomedans. See page 257.

tinople. As it was the intention of the port to grant him an audience, they easily consented to his request, which perhaps had been suggested to him; but instead of a galley, according to the custom observed towards ambassadors, he was sent in a gondola.

The ninth of February, he was conducted to the audience of the grand visier, with more ceremonies than he could reasonably expect, as the agent of a chief, whose sovereignty was not acknowledged by any crowned head. He persisted in vain that he would deliver Ashreff's letter, to none but the grand signior himself; which as the case stood, was not practicable. The Turks, who are not very scrupulous in regard to the privileges even of the most authorized ministers, finding they could not prevail upon him to deliver up the letter, resolved to take it from him.

Ashreff's proposals were very bold, and far from being couched in the most respectful terms. This prince in his letter assumed the pompous title of king of kings; he concluded it with four Arabian verses, the sense of which seems to be very romantic, as well as imperious, viz,

"The sabre and the lance are our sweet basil;

"We despise the daffodil and myrrh;

"Our drink is the blood of our enemies,

"And their skulls serve us for our cups."

The sentence on the signet^s was of the same nature. "The faithful observer of the commandments of the most high; the dust of the feet of the four friends, Abubeker, Omar, Osman, and Ali, is Ashreff, by the divine permission become the most illustrious of the sovereigns of the earth."

The apprehensions which had been entertained at Constantinople, concerning the humiliation of the Afghans, were changed into indignation. As they looked upon the haughtiness of Ashreff as unpardonable, the ministers were very desirous that the people should approve of the war, so that they spared no pains to inflame their resentments.

In the mean time, Abdul Aziz supported his master's interest, with a confidence answerable to the pompous title which that prince had assumed. The negotiation seemed to tend more to mortify the Turks, than the refusal of the Ottoman court to acknowledge Abdul Aziz as ambassador, had humbled this Afghan. He behaved, under these deli-

cate

^s They give the signet the name of Bul. It is an impression in ink, which serves instead of a signature. See Vol. I. Chap. 48.

cate circumstances, with great intrepidity, and as much confidence, as if he had been acknowledged in a public character ; infomuch, that the ministers of the grand signior began at length to be embarrassed. In the answer which the Mufti, and the expounders of the law at Constantinople, gave to a letter written to them by the Miangi and the expounders of the law at Isfahan, we find the principal points on which these conferences turned.

Religion was the object on which the Afghans founded their pretensions. Abdul Aziz reproached the Turks, with having failed in an essential point of their faith, in not making all their efforts, as the Afghans had done, to destroy the monarchy of the Schias. He allowed, that the grand signior was lawful Imam in Turkey ; but he added, that this did not hinder Ashreff and his successors from being Imams in Persia ; especially, as a single chief is not sufficient to govern countries so vastly extended, as those possessed by mussulmen. He maintained, that a conqueror, acknowledged by the grandees of a kingdom, was the lawful sovereign of it ; and as such had a right to claim the towns and provinces which had been torn from it ; since his sovereignty extended to those provinces and towns, as well as to places where his authority was established.

The Turkish commissaries appointed to treat with him, made answer, that the wars which the grand signior had been obliged to maintain against the different christian powers, had prevented his destroying the empire of the Schias ; that he had deprived the Schias of many considerable provinces, and as soon as the peace concluded with the princes of Europe afforded him leisure, he would accomplish the work. They added, that according to law and tradition, there could not be more than one Imam at a time, unless their dominions were separated by the sea, which might prevent all communication : that this was not the case with respect to Persia, nor was Isfahan at such a distance, as to render the nomination of another chief necessary ; since under the reign of Omar, whose empire extended from Mecca to Hamadan, a plurality of Caliphs had never been acknowledged : that the sovereignty of the conquests made by the Afghans, as well as of those made by the grand signior, belonged of right to this monarch, in quality of Imam, while the Afghans could pretend to nothing further, than the moveable goods of the people whom they had vanquished ; and they desired Abdul Aziz to prove the contrary.

C H A P. XXXVI.

The Turkish ministers propose queries to the Musti, relating to the consistency of a rupture with Ashreff. Answer of the Musti. The port declares war against Ashreff. The Afghan ambassador sets out from Constantinople, and is arrested on the road by orders from the grand signior. Casbin surrenders to Abdallah Basha. Dispute between the Turkish generals. Misunderstanding between the Russians and the Turks. Abdallah Basha defeats Tæhmas's troops before Ardeville.

THE Turkish ministers persisted in maintaining that there could be only one Imam, and that this Imam ought to be the grand signior, not only on account of his hereditary sovereignty, but because he had in his power the principal places of worship of the three written religions^b. This dispute, the decision of which seemed to rest on the longest sword, was however supported by Abdul Aziz, who answered undauntedly; that if the mussulmen of the two empires could acknowledge only the same head, this title was due to Ashreff, as descended from the illustrious tribe of Coraich^c, to whom the dignity of Caliph by right belongs, and as destroyer of the monarchy of the Schias; and not to a prince born among a nation of an obscure original, who, not satisfied with granting peace to heretics, had, by a treaty contrary to the law, delivered into the hands of infidels, several cities^d in which mosques had been erected.

These conferences served to increase the animosity of both parties. The port was desirous of war; but as the Mahommedans look upon it as vile and dishonourable to declare war against a people of their own sect, the Turks would have been glad at least, that Ashreff should lay them under a necessity of breaking with him, or to find some proper

^a Mecca, because of the temple, which they say Abraham, father of the Hebrews, built there, and as the place where Mahommed was born: Jerusalem, respected by the Jews, and much more so by the christians: and Medina, the seat of the empire, and burying place of their prophet, and of the first Caliphs his successors.

^c The tribe of Mahommed, one of the most illustrious of Mecca, who were distinguished by their care of the temple which was intrusted to them.

^d Belgrade ceded in 1718 to the emperor by the treaty of Passarowitz, and Derbend to the empire of Russia.

per reason for a rupture: the most plausible seemed to arise from the very nature of the negotiation, especially as the Afghan, in the course of the argument pretended to prove his master superior in birth and dignity to the grand signior.

The letters which passed between the Musti of Constantinople, and the Miangi of Isfahan already mentioned, were made public, and served as a manifesto; and perhaps had a stronger effect, than if it had borne that title; for it was made use of to conciliate the minds of the people to a rupture with the Afghans. The port then demanded the Fetfa¹ of the Musti, proposing the following queries.

“ 1. Whether it be permitted by the law, for the true believers to acknowledge and obey at one and the same time two different chiefs?

“ 2. In what manner they ought to act against a mussulman, who after subduing the capital of Persia, and some other towns contiguous to the conquests made by the Ottoman arms, should contest the grand signior's sovereignty, annexed to the dignity of Imam, and send letters demanding those conquests, under pretence that they constitute part of an empire which belongs to him of right, as possessor of the capital, and of the throne of the Schias?”

The Musti answered the first of these queries, “ That a plurality of chiefs was declared unlawful by the assembly of the Ashabs², unless there should be some barrier betwixt their territories, such, for instance as the Indian Ocean, which might hinder them to consult, and to assist each other.

On the second query he determined, “ That if the mussulman in question desisted from his pretensions, and submitted to the authority of the head of the faithful, every thing would be right; but if he persisted in his rebellion, his death was declared necessary by a precept of the law, which enjoined the destruction of him.”

These Fetfas were followed by a declaration of war. The grand signior being affronted at the insolence of Ashreff's seals, caused a signet to be made, with an inscription of the same romantic nature as that of Ashreff's already related.

“ The

¹ See Vol. II. chap. V.

² A name given to the companions of Mahommed.

- “ The defender of justice, zealous for the four friends ”,
 “ Is Achmed, son of the warlike Mahommed, ever ac-
 “ customed to subdue his enemies.
 “ By the eternal truth, Ashreff is not the most illustrious
 “ of the kings of the earth :
 “ He is a paste kneaded with the leaven of Mir Vais, a
 “ rebel, and symbol of ignominy.”

If we consider with what a blind enthusiasm some religious wars have been carried on in Europe, we shall not be surprized at these romantic preludes to the shedding of Mahomedan blood. After these contests, Abdul Aziz had his audience of leave from the grand visier on the last day of March, with very little ceremony. This minister however presented him with ten purses^o for himself, one for his nephew, who had accompanied him in his journey, and another for his chaplain. He also sent a very fine watch for Ashreff's Athemat Doulet, in acknowledgment for a string of pearls which he had received from that minister. The next day Abdul Aziz took his leave of the Musti, and departed for Bagdat under the conduct of a Turkish Aga.

This Afghan ambassador had scarce entered the province of Diarbekir, when he was arrested by the commandant of Kerkisia, a fortress near the Euphrates. The port, in order to authorize such a proceeding, gave out that Ashreff had set the example, by confining, in the common jail, an officer whom Achmed Basha had sent to him ; but it may be presumed, that the grand signior was unwilling this envoy should inform Ashreff, of the repugnance which the Turkish army shewed to the war.

In the mean time, the inhabitants of Casbin made an offer to Abdallah Basha, of submitting to the Ottoman dominion, on condition the grand signior would be satisfied with sending them a Turkish governor, but no troops. This general, however, sent 12,000 men under the command of Ali Basha, one of his principal officers, who took possession of the town in the name of the grand signior. Maraga also fell under the dominion of the port ; but this conquest had like to have proved fatal, by the jealousy which arose between the Baschas Abdallah and Achmed, who both pretended to the government of that place. This town had always been in the district of Tavis, a circumstance which seemed
 decisive

ⁿ Abukerker, Omar, Osman, and Ali.

^o 500 dollars of 4 s. each purse.

decisive in favour of Abdallah ; and yet the reputation of Achmed prevailed over every other consideration. Abdallah would have retired to Ourfa, the capital of his government, if the grand signior had not recommended his sacrificing his private resentment to the interest of the empire.

The Russian minister at the port having learnt that a body of Turks had advanced towards Ghilan, made his complaint, and was answered, that the Russians ought to repel any troops who should disturb them, contrary to treaty. It could not however be supposed, that this detachment had acted without orders ; hence it was inferred, that the Turks had entered Ghilan, only to feel the pulse of the Russians, who were considered as enjoying the choicest province in the the whole country, tho' in fact they drew but very little, if any advantage from it. It is reasonable to presume, that the curiosity of the Turks was excited by the sollicitation of both the English and French ambassadors : the Armenians, who were wont to bring silk to them from Ghilan, on account of these troubles discontinued their caravans, which was by no means satisfactory to the merchants of these nations.

The Ottoman armies had in the mean time taken the field, and their first operations seemed to promise as much success as the preceding years. Abdallah Basha received advice, that the Persians had assembled troops near the conflux of the Aras and the Kura, designing to attack Ardeville. Upon which he detached 10,000 men against them, under the command of his son Abderrahman, and put them to flight.

C H A P. XXXVII.

Tæhmas Shah endeavours to negotiate a treaty with the Russians and Turks. Ashreff fortifies Isfahan. He marches an army to meet Achmed Basha. Stratagem used by Ashreff to evade a battle with the Turks. Achmed resolves to give the Afghans battle. The Turks are defeated.

TÆHMAS Shah was now a fugitive in the province of Mazanderan, after his escape from the snare which had been laid for him by Ashreff. That escape convinced him, that the throne of his ancestors was recoverable only by force of arms ; and seeing himself betrayed or deserted in every quarter, he determined to agree to the execution of the treaty of Constantinople. In consequence hereof he sent an ambassador to the court of Russia ; and at the same time

he

he wrote to Abdallah Basha, desiring this general to acquaint the port of his resolution.

His letter, among other particulars, contained as follows :
 “ The vilest of our subjects, some miserable tribes of Af-
 “ ghans, have by the permission of the Supreme, revolted
 “ against their lawful sovereign, and made themselves mas-
 “ ter of part of our dominions. You have taken advantage
 “ of this fatal conjuncture to attack us, and these hostilities
 “ have prevented our stopping the progress of the rebels.
 “ Such a behaviour we did not expect. Who could have
 “ imagined, that an Ottoman general would have had re-
 “ course to artifice, to make himself master of Teflis ?

“ How can we discover an enemy disguised under the veil
 “ of friendship ? Does the bird know that the spray on
 “ which it perches, will one day make its cage ^h ?

“ The Russians have offered us their assistance, but we
 “ refused it from a nation who are enemies to our religion.
 “ Being therefore under a necessity of punishing our rebellious
 “ subjects, we earnestly beg you will engage our illustrious
 “ father, the Padishah ⁱ, who is the refuge of the universe,
 “ to grant us a truce of three years ; and we agree that the
 “ countries which he has conquered, shall always remain in
 “ his hands.”

How advantageous soever these proposals might appear, the port wavered in her determination. If she granted the truce, Tæhmas might be enabled to recover his dominions, which he now yielded by necessity. On the other hand, if she continued deaf to his petition, he might throw himself intirely into the hands of the Russians. Under these circumstances, the grand signior commissioned Mustafa Effendi, a man, who by his extraordinary abilities had raised himself early in life to very considerable employments, to go and examine upon the spot into the situation of affairs, under the specious pretext of negotiating the treaty which this prince had proposed.

Tæhmas's proposals to the court of Russia did not meet with greater success. Prince Dolgoruki, who commanded this year in the conquered provinces, detained the ambassador ; and we do not find that any regard was shewn to the proposals : indeed it was not probable that the Russians should

^h Arabian or Persian verses.

ⁱ A title which the grand signior assumes, and which is explained by that of emperor, but carries with it also a different meaning, as the chief of the Mahomedans both in spirituals and temporals.

should appear in behalf of the fugitive king of Persia, when they remained inactive with regard to their own conquest.

These negotiations of Tæhmas did not create so great uneasiness at Isfahan, as the neighbourhood of the Ottoman armies. Ashreff, considering that all his forces would be insufficient to defend so large and ill fortified a town, had formed a project of a very singular nature. This was to build a second city within the inclosure of the first. The walls were made of earth, and about forty feet high; they were flanked with towers near fifty paces distant from each other, and surrounded with a large deep ditch. This new city included the old citadel, the great square, and the king's palace; and what is most surprizing, it was finished in less than three months, tho' it was above four miles in circumference.

Ashreff having thus prepared a place of retreat, thought of rendering it more difficult of access to his new enemies. With this design, he detached some troops, who ravaged the open country from this capital to the very gates of Casbin.

Achmed Basha, who was marching towards Isfahan at the head of a formidable army, was therefore obliged to change his rout. He was not advanced far, when the inhabitants of Casbin, excited by the emissaries of Ashreff, declared for this prince, and drove away the garrison which Abdallah Kouproli had quartered in that city, contrary to the treaty which they had made.

Ashreff, depending more on his cunning and politics, than on the strength of his armies, published several manifestos upon this occasion, by which he exhorted some other towns to follow the example of Casbin: and in order to persuade them to it the more easily, he promised to exempt them from all imposts during the space of three years, if they would voluntarily submit to his dominion.

This prince, after the example of his predecessor, used all his endeavours to prevent the inhabitants of the capital knowing what passed abroad: yet they received some imperfect accounts concerning the motions and designs of the Turks, which flung the city into a general consternation. The Ottoman army were apprehended to be very numerous, so that the fall of the Afghans was considered as inevitable. The Persians and christians were equally desirous of changing masters, the one thro' aversion, and the other from views of commerce; but the recent remembrance of the miseries they had suffered, and the notion they had entertained of the cruelty of the Turks, made them consider this new revolution

tion as a misfortune, in which they were in great danger of being involved.

Ashreff was not without anxiety, but he concealed all emotions of fear, with a seeming indifference. That he might not risk his whole fortune at once, by waiting for the enemy under the walls of his capital, he put himself at the head of his troops, and went forward to meet them. His first camp was at Shah Baghi, a place distant five or six leagues from Isfahan. Here he spent some days in making the necessary preparations; after which he marched towards Hamadan, by the same road which he knew Achmed Basfa had taken.

The Turkish army was advanced about twenty leagues from that city, when his scouts brought him word, that the Afghans were within sight. Towards the 20th of November, the two armies incamped within three leagues of each other; they had been in this position some days, when Achmed Basfa resolved to try the mettle of an enemy, with whose manner of fighting he was not acquainted. With this view, he ordered two thousand horse*, supported by four thousand Janissaries, to advance before the main body of his army; but this detachment having been conducted by guides not well acquainted with the road; within half a league of Ashreff's camp, were surrounded by the Afghans, and cut in pieces; almost in sight of their general, who was in full march with his whole army to their assistance.

Achmed, discouraged at this misfortune, ordered his army to entrench themselves. Ashreff, in the mean while, had recourse to art and stratagem. The small number and the inexperience of his troops not permitting him to expect any advantage over his enemy by nobler methods; he endeavoured to sow the seeds of sedition in the Turkish camp. He spared neither money nor promises to tempt those officers whom he thought least mindful of their duty; whilst his partisans in the Turkish army handed writings about in form of manifesto's, wherein he protested, "That it was with the
" greatest concern he saw mussulmen bent upon the de-
" struction of each other; that this war, unlawful in itself,
" and dishonourable to religion, had already lasted too long.
" In regard to himself, he called God and Mahommed to
" witness, that he wished for nothing with so much earnest-
" ness, as to enter into a reasonable accommodation." To this he added another expedient of a more public kind, but
not

* Spahis, or Asiatic cavalry.

not less artful : He chose from among his nation four Cheiks¹, the most venerable for their age and knowledge ; and ordering them to put on their ceremonial habits, he sent them as ambassadors to the Basha's camp.

These old men presented themselves unarmed, and were conducted to the general, who treated them with respect. After the usual compliments, the eldest of them addressing himself to the Basha, in an audible but modest tone of voice, spoke to this effect : “ Ashreff, our sovereign lord, has sent “ us to desire you not to draw your sabre against mussul- “ men, who have obeyed the precept of the law in subvert- “ ing the throne of the Schias. He is surprized that the “ Ottomans should treat him as an enemy, and make an al- “ liance with christians, with a design to strip him of a king- “ dom, to which his being a descendent of the prophet's “ own tribe, his religion, and his conquests, give him such “ just rights. He protests before God, that he lays all the “ blood that shall be spilt in this iniquitous war to your “ charge, if you oppose his establishing the true worship “ in his dominions, and reduce the Afghans to the hard ne- “ cessity of defending themselves against their own bre- “ thren.”

This audience was given, according to custom, in full assembly. The Turkish general perceiving that this discourse made an impression on the minds of some of his soldiers, who were already influenced by the age and character of the deputies, made answer immediately ; “ That he was “ come into Persia in consequence of the orders of the empe- “ ror his master ; that mussulmen could not, according to “ law, have more than one head in spirituals, as well as “ temporals ; and that the grand signior being possessed of “ this title as successor to the Caliphs, Ashreff must ac- “ knowledge him in that quality, or he should soon feel “ the effects of the strength and courage of the Ottoman “ forces.”

The general had scarce finished, when the callers to prayer^m gave notice that it was noon. The Cheiks, attentive to the purpose of their commission, as well as their duty in point of religion, rose up immediately without making any reply, and joined in prayer with the Turks. By this act they gave proof of the conformity of their religion ; they concluded their prayer, begging with a loud voice, that the Almighty

¹ This Arabian word signifies not only an old man, but likewise a prince, a doctor, or the head of a community.

^m These are called Moezins.

Almighty would please to open the eyes, and to touch the hearts of these musfulmen their brethren.

After this they withdrew making fresh protestations that their master was innocent of the blood that was going to be shed. This artful conduct, strengthened by the secret intrigues of Ashreff, soon began to produce its effects; for the deputies were hardly out of the camp, when they were followed by a prince of the Kourds, with five thousand men of his nation.

The Bascha being informed, that the Cheiks were attended by more troops than he had sent to escort them, suspected some treachery, and dispatched a large body of horse after the deserters: part of this detachment joined the Kourds, so that the rest being inferior in number, were obliged to suffer them to proceed unmolested to the enemy's army.

Achmed being struck with this event, which might prove of a very dangerous consequence, resolved to give the enemy battle. Ashreff, grown braver by necessity, and the reinforcement of the Kourds, who came over to him, marched immediately out of his camp, and advanced towards the enemy. The Turks quitted their lines, and ranged themselves in battalia. Their army consisted of between seventy and eighty thousand men. The right wing was formed by twenty thousand Kourds, who were all cavalry, under the orders of Babec Soliman Oglou their prince. The left was commanded by Selihtar Mahommed, and five other Baschas, among whom were Abderrahmam, son of the Seraskier Abdallah, and Houssein also, of the celebrated family of Kouproli. This army was also attended with a train of seventy pieces of cannon.

Ashreff's army consisted of seventeen thousand foot, among whom were twelve thousand Afghans, with coats of mailⁿ; sixteen thousand horse, Afghans, Persees, and Derghezins, with forty harquebusses mounted on camels backs. This prince, surrounded by his principal ministers, was seated, according to the custom of the Indian kings, on a throne carried by an elephant.

The Turks gave the signal of battle at six in the morning, by firing ten pieces of cannon. The Afghans returned it with five: upon which the Seraskier charged them briskly at the head of the right wing, and repeated the attack three several times with great bravery, during which time his artillery

ⁿ This is a light iron net-work about the head and shoulders, and sometimes they wear the same kind of armour on their bodies under their cloaths.

tillery kept an incessant fire; yet he was repulsed on every side, and obliged, towards three in the afternoon, to retire in disorder to his intrenchments. The Turks lost twelve thousand men: their defeat would probably have been more complete, if Ashreff had not forbid his men to pursue them.

This conduct might also be imputed to a new piece of policy. The greatest part of the Ottoman army had not engaged, and an eagerness of pursuit might have snatched the victory from him; especially as there was little reason to believe that the enemy, contrary to their custom in such cases, would keep the field.

C H A P. XXXVIII.

Artful behaviour of Ashreff towards the Turks. Situation of the port in regard to other powers. Great preparations in Turkey against the Afghans. The Turks unsuccessful against the Armenians. Prudent administration of Ashreff. The Turks send commissaries into Persia to treat with Ashreff. A treaty of peace concluded in the camp of Hamadan, between the Turks and the Afghans in 1727.

ASHREFF, after his victory, removed his camp to the field of battle. The event justified the prudence of his measures; for the next night, the Kourds spread themselves along the lines of the Turks, crying out, that as part of the army was gone over to the Afghans, they would also retire immediately; after which, taking an advantage of the disorder which they had occasioned, they began to plunder the baggage.

These seditious clamours produced the effect, which the authors of them intended. The Seraskier perceiving that he should expose himself to no purpose, in venturing a second engagement, while his troops were thus disheartened and mutinous, decamped silently in the night; and leaving his baggage and artillery behind him, he retired to Khermansha.

The Afghan prince did not interrupt his march: it was not his design to demolish an army which might be easily replaced, but to baffle the projects of the port, by increasing the repugnance which the Turkish nation in general shewed to this war. The same religious zeal, which has ever created such bloody contests between the Turks and the Persians, was now a reason not to fight with the Afghans. Ashreff accompanied rather than pursued them as far as the walls of this

city. But not satisfied with having defeated his enemies, and driven them from his frontiers, which was acting merely on the defensive, he used other gentle expedients to disarm them.

He was no sooner arrived near Khhermansha, than this artful Afghan sent deputies to Achmed Bassha, who upon the approach of the Persian army, retired with his scattered forces towards Bagdat. Instead of proposing a negotiation, as was expected, these deputies declared to him publickly to this effect: "It is the opinion of our sovereign Ashreff, that
 "the spoils taken from people of the same religion, cannot
 "be kept as a fair booty: as he is possessed of his dominions
 "as a lawful prince, he does not think fit to act as a robber, by detaining the property of his brethren; for which
 "reason he has commissioned us to acquaint you, that you
 "may send for your treasure and baggage, and, except
 "arms, in general for whatever your troops left in their
 "camp." To this act of generosity, Ashreff added that of returning the prisoners he had taken. Doubtless this prince intended to create friends of people, whom he had no further reason to fear, at least in the present campaign.

The Turks were the more affected with it, as they had other troubles upon their hands. The death of Peter the Great, had not been attended with any of those changes, which they expected. This monarch's last will, supported by the grandees, and by the whole army, established the empress Catharine on the throne, without any competition. Vachtanga, the Georgian prince, who was driven from Teflis, and retired to St. Petersburg, was now sent to Astrachan. The Russian empress being affronted at the little regard which the port shewed to the representations of her ministers, required of this prince to take up his residence in that city, in the neighbourhood of his own country. This circumstance, joined to the inconstancy of the Georgians, alarmed the Turks.

Sultan Deli, a nephew of the Khan of the Crim Tartars, now headed a body of male-contents, and gathered new strength and courage, by a great number of Circassians and other Tartars, whom he drew to his standard. The reputation of his arms, and the desire of plunder, had lately tempted them to make an expedition towards Azoph, from whence they returned loaded with spoils, before the Khan had time to oppose them.

In the mean time, things continued in some confusion on the western coast of the Caspian Sea. Prince Dolgoruk
 made

made no progress on the side of Shirvan : the Lesgees were masters of great part of that province and were interested to oppose the intended partition ; so that the Russian and Turkish deputies had no opportunity to execute their commission. Towards the south, the Arabs, naturally fierce and impatient of any foreign yoke, would not submit without the utmost reluctance. The title of Coraish, which Ashreff assumed, joined to the desire of novelty, might engage them in that prince's party ; and with such assistance he might easily become master of Mecca and Medina, and cause himself to be proclaimed head of the Mahomedans °. The troubles, which had lately broke out in Egypt, were not intirely pacified. The court endeavoured to insinuate for some time, that Ashreff had embraced the religion of the Persians ; but this artifice was easily seen through by the people. A war, undertaken against a nation of the same faith, was considered as odious and unlawful ; and the most zealous attributed the loss of the battle to the divine justice, which had confounded the temerity of those who opposed the propagation of the faith, by declaring against the destroyers of the monarchy of the Schias.

Under such circumstances, a person of less esteem than Achmed Basha, might have had the disaster imputed to his misconduct, and, according to the usual policy of eastern countries, under this pretence been sacrificed to the public resentment. But this general was the son of a man, whose head the port had demanded several times to no purpose ; and they were now to behave towards him with deference, that he might not declare in favour of Ashreff, by which means he might assume an independent sovereignty in this province.

The republic of Venice had not forgot her rights to the Morea, nor the emperor of the Romans his to Bosnia : this prince, already dissatisfied with the Algerines, who had taken one of the ships belonging to the East India company of Ostend, was not only in peace with all Europe, but also closely connected with the Russians.

With regard to Shah Tæhmas, they did not treat him with such contempt, as to neglect demanding of him the cession of the provinces they had conquered ; yet all the abilities of Mustafa Effendi, could not prevail on him to agree to the conditions proposed. So that the Turks, tho' masters of great armies, and strongly inclined to reduce Persia to their

their obedience, saw themselves in danger of being forced to relinquish this favourite object.

The grand signior, sensibly disgusted at his late disgrace, opened his treasures, and employed all his ministers in making dispositions for the next campaign. They embarked twelve thousand men at Alexandretta. Six thousand men of Eydin received orders to join them, as also a body of troops drawn from the standing forces of Egypt: and concluding there was better reason to depend on christian subjects, who could not be worked upon by the artful insinuations of Ashreff, they ordered the Bascha of Nissa, with twenty thousand Albanians, and the Bascha of Bosnia, with ten thousand Bosnians, to take the same rout towards Persia. The beginning of April this year, [1727.] ten men of war were also sent to Salonica for fresh reinforcements.

These powerful succours were sent to Achmed Bascha. The winter had passed without any action worth notice, except that of Savi Mustafa, who marched out of Ganja, of which town he was governor, and dispersed the Armenians in the neighbourhood of Shamakie. These people, laying hold of the present circumstances, formed themselves into a kind of republic, which, as we have mentioned, distinguished itself by the total defeat of a body of six thousand men, whom Abdallah Bascha had sent against them the preceding summer. It was not long before they had their revenge also of the governor of Ganja. It was their custom to assemble in great numbers during Easter, in a plain in that neighbourhood. Having received intelligence that the Turks, who could not pursue them into their mountains, had formed a design to surprize them on this occasion, they took their measures, and not only defended themselves, but also drew the Turks into their defiles, where they obtained an easy victory over them.

Ashreff saw that the Ottoman court meditated his ruin; and tho' he had kept the field, and obtained a victory in the last campaign, he had hardly any other support than his own abilities to maintain himself upon the throne. His great point was to increase his reputation for piety and religion. With this design he obliged his ministers and principal officers to give him an exact account of their conduct and administration: at the same time, to demonstrate how much he meant to govern as a just prince, he sent to all his governors and great officers, a detail of his military operations, and of the manner in which he had governed since his accession to the throne.

This piece of policy was less necessary than he imagined. The vast preparations, which seemed to threaten his utter destruction, vanished of themselves. The new raised troops in Turkey, who had been deceived with regard to the place to which they were at first ordered to march, obstinately refused to pass the frontiers of the empire. The desertion was so much the greater, as the apprehension of a general insurrection secured them from punishment. The people and the soldiers murmured alike against a war, which their honest, tho' superstitious, prejudices, taught them to look upon as unjust and impious.

The port, alarmed at an opposition which defeated her projects, did not hesitate long upon what measures to take. She dispatched orders to the Seraskeir, Achmed Basha, to enter as soon as possible into a negotiation, and to conclude a peace with Ashreff on the most honourable conditions he could obtain.

How pressing soever these orders were, Achmed was in no hurry to comply with them. This general having received fresh succours from the Kourds and Arabs, had formed an army of 60,000 men; with these he hoped to repair his loss in the last campaign, the disgrace of which could not be imputed to him. The temper of this general was too well known by the Turkish ministers, to depend on an absolute compliance on his side. Therefore they sent Richidi Effendi, a man of abilities and experience in business; he arrived in September at the army, which had already entered the plain of Hamadan. Achmed Basha had at least the satisfaction of treating at the head of a numerous body of forces. The Afghan army was not far off, when the Basha sent to Zoula, prime-minister and general of Ashreff's troops, that now was the time to decide their quarrel; therefore he had only to accept of the conditions which he was commissioned to propose to him, or he must prepare for battle; when he hoped to shew what an Ottoman general, at the head of a faithful army, was capable of performing.

This blunt manner of opening the conferences, contributed to hasten the conclusion of a peace, now become equally acceptable to both parties. The negotiation being referred to men of abilities and moderation, towards the beginning of October a treaty of peace was at length signed in the Camp of Hamadan.

The articles were as follows :

- I. The grand signior shall be acknowledged head of the muslulmen, and the true successor of the Caliphs.
- II. In this quality, the publick prayer ^p shall be made in his name throughout all Persia.
- III. The provinces, cities, and towns, which he possesses in Persia, shall be ceded to him in perpetuity.
- IV. He shall re-enter into possession of Chusistan, retaken from him during the war.
- V. He shall take possession, and hold in like manner, the cities of Zengan, Sultanie, Ebher, Tæhيران, and their dependencies.
- VI. The artillery, arms, and standards, taken from the Ottoman army in 1726, shall be restored.
- VII. Ashreff shall be acknowledged by the grand signior as lawful sovereign of the kingdom of Persia.
- VIII. He shall be named as such after the grand signior in the public prayers, and shall coin money in his own name.
- IX. He shall appoint an Emir Hahdgee to conduct the Persian caravan, which goes every year in pilgrimage to Mecca ^q. This caravan shall, according to custom, take the road to Bagdat ; and the governor of that city shall not have a power, as formerly, to appoint a chief over it ; nor shall it be subject to the authority of any of the grand signior's officers.

The treaty being ratified on both sides, the peace was proclaimed by circular letters through the Ottoman empire ; and the grand signior, by a solemn embassy, acknowledged Ashreff as the lawful sovereign of Persia.

^p Khotbah.

^q This custom, as I have observed, had been discontinued by the Persians, though the Sunnis make a point of it.

P A R T IX.
 THE
 BIRTH and LIFE
 OF
 NADIR KOULI,

From 1687,

Till his putting TÆHMAS SHAH in
 possession of MESCHED in 1727.

C H A P. XXXIX.

The name of the Persian usurper, his birth, captivity, robberies, and employment in the service of a Beg, whom he murders ; he marries the daughter of the deceased, and retires into the mountains : his engagement in the service of the governor of Khorasan : he commands an expedition against the Ousbegs, acquires great honour, and is afterwards disgraced.

THE Sovereign of the universe, who fixes the periods of empires, and restrains the wild ambition of princes, had now prepared an instrument of his vengeance to chastise the Afghans, whose cruelties had filled Persia with blood. Their triumphs drew near an end : the hour approached, in which the Persians were to take ample satisfaction for all the ravages committed by these usurpers, from the death of Gurgin Khan ^a, to their invasion of Persia ^b, and for all the dreadful calamities they had occasioned during that period ^c.

About

^a In 1709.

^b In 1722.

^c Till 1727.

About this time appeared, with a more distinguished eclat, Nadir Kouli, the history of whose life and actions will ever seem wonderful, because they are really so, and not the fictions of romance, or the flattery of panegyrists: characters like his, will excite the curiosity, and command the attention of posterity, so long as the lives of great men, and accounts of great actions, continue the object of historical enquiry. We shall here find a man, whose birth and beginning were so obscure, as with difficulty to be traced out; conducting to an issue, with amazing resolution and steadiness, opportunities he had worked out for himself; planning with deliberation and foresight, the fabrick of his future fortune; and carrying his designs into execution, with an unwearied application, till, like other mighty conquerors before him, he became terrible to Asia, and the undoubted arbiter of the east. He changed his name, as he changed the situations of his fortune, which has occasioned some perplexity: his real name was Nadir Koul, or Nadir Kouli^d. Nadir, both in the Turkish and Persian languages, signifies wonderful; which epithet is used by the Mahommedans to design the particular attribute of the deity, as we ordinarily say the Almighty; tho' the use and custom of Persia gives it to people of the lowest rank of life. When Shah Tæhmas made him a khan^e, as we shall have occasion to relate, he honoured him with the addition of his own name; and this last is one of the highest dignities that can be bestowed by the monarchs of Persia. He was then Tæhmas Kouli Khan; and tho' Koul signifies a slave, in this sense it is the highest badge of honour in the east. Afterwards, when he became the sovereign of Persia, he reassumed his name Nadir, with the addition of Shah^g; tho' he must be ever considered as an usurper, the name by which he has been most known, and probably will continue to be known, to posterity in Europe, is Tæhmas^h Kouli Khan.

Though authors seem at length agreed about his original name, their accounts differ in some particulars with regard to

^d Koul, in Turkish, is a slave; and Nadir Kouli, signifies the slave of the wonderful: for the idiom of the language fixes the genitive on the antecedent noun, so that instead of Nadiri Koul, they say Nadir Kouli. ^e Noble or chieftain.

^f Which signifies the lord, who is a slave of Tæhmas. ^g Nadir Shah, or Nadir the king.

^h This orthography seems most agreeable to the Persian pronunciation: but this, as well as other Oriental words, are variously wrote by different authors, as Tammas, Tahmas, &c.

to his birth, his family, and first appearance in life. As to himself, he sometimes boasted of the meanness of his extraction; at others, policy or caprice induced him to claim a relation to Ginghiz Khan, the great Turkuman conqueror, and also to Tamerlane. I have not yet seen any account so satisfactory and consistent, as what I received in Persia; and I am the more inclined to acquiesce in it, because, tho' there are very few reports of things, in which the Persians agree¹, yet in the circumstances I am now about to relate, people of the most understanding, and of the best intelligence, unanimously concurred.

According to these accounts, Nadir was born in the year 1687, at a village, or more probably in a tent, a few days journey² to the south-east of Mesched, not far from Kælat¹. He was descended from the Affhars, who are a tribe of Tartars, and subjects of Persia: they live for the most part by husbandry, and supply the Persians with horses and cattle. The name of Nadir's father was Imam Kouli, whose situation of life was such, that he earned his bread by making caps and sheepskin coats, which is the apparel of the lowest of the common people in Persia. Nadir himself was bred up to no other employment than that of a shepherd, and being only thirteen years of age when Imam Kouli died, he was left in so poor a condition, that he was obliged to gather sticks in the woods, for the support of himself and his mother, and carry them to market on an ass and a camel³, which were his only patrimony.

It

¹ Whether it has been from this cause, or that few people have travelled in Persia, I find the several accounts which have been written of Tæhmas Kouli Khan, are, for the most part, very erroneous; so that in the prosecution of this work, I shall chuse rather not to say all that I have heard, than to advance any thing of the truth of which I am in the least diffident.

² A day's journey is commonly reckoned 24 miles.

¹ I do not find this place in the maps; but I shall have frequent occasion to mention it as a strong hold, and the repository of the treasure taken from the Moghols.

³ In proof of this I was told an anecdote, pretty remarkable, and much to his honour. After he was exalted to the throne and sovereignty of Persia, a person named Saidar, who had been his companion and fellow-labourer in ranging the woods, was created a khan, and granted the privilege of wearing the black heron's feathers on the left side: this is one of the highest marks of favour in Persia, for their kings wear these plumes upon the right, as a badge of their sovereignty. This man died at Kassar, on an embassy to Russia. Nadir, upon conferring

these

It is recorded of him, that when he was returning in triumph from his conquest of India, he happened to pass near the place of his nativity, where he made a set speech to his chief captains, in which he related in what manner he had passed the early part of his life; and, in particular, mentioned the feeding his father's camel, concluding to this effect: "You now see, to what a height it has pleased the Almighty to exalt me; from hence learn not to despise men of estate."

About the year 1704, when he was 17 or 18 years of age, the Ousbeg Tartars made an irruption into Khorasan, where they put many of the inhabitants to the sword, and carried others into slavery; among the last were Nadir Kouli and his mother: she died in captivity, but

1708. he made his escape in 1708, and returned to Khorasan. From this time we hear no more of him, till with some of his companions he robbed a flock of sheepⁿ; the money which this produced, enabled him to retire into the mountains: however, we do not find that he continued

1712. the profession of a robber for any length of time, but entered into the service of a Beg, by whom he was employed as a courier. He was once charged with dispatches of importance to the Persian court at Isfahan, and sent in company with another courier, as is frequently practised in Persia. Whether Nadir was ambitious of being the sole carrier of these dispatches; or whether his fellow-courier did not travel fast enough; or for some other secret reason, he killed him. After his arrival at Isfahan, he told his story so well, that he procured admittance to the ministers of Shah Sultan Hussein, to whom he assigned such plausible reasons for

these honours upon him, spoke these words, "Do not grow proud, but remember the ass, and the picking of sticks." And so late as 1745, Kelek Beg, a yurbashi or captain, declared, that Nadir Kouli, having formerly borrowed of him 50 batmans of wheat, which is about the value of thirty shillings of our money, he had often importuned both Nadir Kouli and his brother, who was afterwards Ibrahim Khan, for payment of it; and that at length they did repay him thirty batmans of the fifty. What is still more remarkable, and more convincing of the truth; after he ascended the throne of Persia, he took notice of this incident in a public manner, and reproached Kelek Beg for his unmerciful importunity, but did not pay the balance of this debt of poverty, nor take any further notice of the man.

ⁿ Not of his father's, as some writers mention, for he was already dead; nor do we find (tho' his uncle might be in better circumstances) that his father was ever master of a flock of sheep.

for his conduct on the road, that he was not only acquitted, but received presents, and was sent back with answers to the letters he had brought. His master, however, received him with such a countenance, as gave reason to suspect that he meditated his destruction. Nadir perceiving this, resolved to kill his master; to which he was the more induced, from a violent passion he had conceived for his daughter, whom he had demanded in marriage, but was refused. After the murder was perpetrated, he took the lady away, and retired into the mountains. One effect of this enterprize was the birth of Riza Kouli Myrza, whose genius and disposition had so great a resemblance with his father's. This desperate action having acquired him a reputation for courage, some of the domestics of his late master, the Beg, joined him, and they became robbers: in this station they continued for some time, as favourable opportunities occurred. Nadir at length offered his service to Babulu Khan governor of Khorasan^o, by whom he was accepted in the capacity of a gentleman usher^p.

It may seem strange, that a chief of a gang of freebooters, should be received into the family of a go- 1714.
vernor of a province, and have an honourable office bestowed on him. But this will not appear such a matter of surprise, if we consider the great extent of country, and that Nadir's robberies were for the most part in Mazanderan, which is three or four hundred miles distant from Mesched; add to this, that a man of personal strength and bravery generally meets with a favourable reception in Persia, without being much questioned concerning his manner of life. Besides, the revolt of Mir Vais had alarmed the eastern provinces, as it gave occasion for the Tartars to make frequent inroads; so that men of a promising figure, or remarkable for

• He had also the title of Begler Beg, or lord of lords. These I have had occasion to explain; there are not above three or four in the empire; of whom one is always fixed in Khorasan: this province has been generally considered as a kingdom, and the government given to the king's son, or nearest relation: some ages are past since a wall was built along this frontier, to prevent the incursion of the Tartars, of which there are still some remains; but Shah Abas the Great removed several thousand families from other provinces, and brought them hither, alledging that a wall of flesh was the most effectual barrier against an enemy; and Nadir after this example fixed several families of Jews and Christians, as well as Mahommedans, in Mesched, to some of whom he lent money to trade, to others lands were assigned to cultivate.

^p Efik Agassi.

for their gallant behaviour, were sure of being acceptable; and thus we may reconcile the conduct of the governor of Khorasan.

The Persians are all supposed to be soldiers upon occasion; and it may be presumed, that Nadir's reputation for courage and great personal strength, were recommendations more prevalent than virtue, or any polite accomplishment. But without being bred at court, from the strength of his own genius and discernment, he was a master of the arts of address, and having a mind unrestrained by any moral consideration, he insinuated himself into the affections of those, whom he afterwards made no scruple to destroy. He behaved so well in this new service, that he won the heart of his master; and, under the specious pretence of desiring to please, he concealed his ambition. The satisfaction he expressed in his present situation, induced his companions to believe, that to be faithful in the cause he espoused, was the virtue he aspired at most; however, he affected a peculiar zeal for some, whilst he shewed a coldness for others, as they seemed more or less inclined to please him.

The distress^a of Persia increasing, he had not been
 1717. long in the service of Babulu-Khan, before a command in the army was given him, in which he behaved with great intrepidity, in skirmishes with the Tartars of Khieva and Bokhara, who frequently made inroads on the frontiers of Khorasan. Ezadallah being already master of Herat,
 1719. and the Kourds in the west making incursions into Irac Agemi; these Tartars^b, who are generally called Ousbegs^c, came this year in a body of above 10,000 men, and began to lay waste the most fertile plains of Khorasan, plundering the inhabitants, and carrying many thousands into captivity. In this emergency Babulu Khan collected all his forces, which did not exceed 6000 men, and of these part were infantry. His officers shewed a reluctance to try their fortune with so unequal a force, against a people of such known bravery as the Tartars. Nadir Kouli, however, had different sentiments of the matter, and from his experience of the valour of the Khan's troops, he offered his service to march at their head against these ravagers; declaring at the same time, that he would engage his life upon the event. Nadir's military virtues were evidently superior to those of the

^a See Vol. III. Chap. XXII.

^b Of independent Tartary.

^c This word we have mentioned to signify free and independent.

the officers about the Khan, though he was not then above 33 years of age. The Khan was so sensible of this, that he had already given him the command of 1000^f; and not having the least doubt of his fidelity, he accepted the offer, and conferred upon him the command of his troops, during the intended expedition, whilst himself remained in the city, to keep good order, and prevent the inhabitants from following the example of those of Herat, who had revolted three years before. Several of the officers refused to act under this new general, but their place was soon supplied by others, whom Nadir approved of.

The Ousbegs were already advanced to the banks of the river Tedjen, within a few days march of Mesched. Nadir having with great application provided what was necessary for the expedition, marched at the head of his troops in search of the enemy, who were pillaging at large; however, the news of the approach of a Persian army brought them together, and they prepared for battle; their numbers being almost double to those under Nadir's command. We have no particular account of this action, but in general terms, that the Tartars, according to their ordinary custom, charged with great fury. Nadir having selected a proper ground, and encouraged his men, stood the shock; and when the Tartars by their own impetuosity were in some disorder, the Persian troops made a general discharge of their fire-arms, then falling on with their sabres and battle-axes, put them to flight, destroying near 3000, and retaking all their plunder and captives, which were very considerable.

Nadir, elated with this his first victory, returned in triumph to Mesched, where he was received with great expressions of joy. The fire of his ambition now began to blaze, nor could he suppress the consciousness of his services, but demanded to be confirmed in his office of general, under the command of Babulu Khan: this governor assured him that he would write to court in his favour, and that nothing should be wanting on his part, to reward his merit. Whether it was that Babulu Khan did not act ingenuously and agreeable to his promise; or that the weak administration of Shah Sultan Hussein evaded the promotion of Nadir, is uncertain;

^f Commanders of 1000 are called Mim Bashis. As few readers can retain a remembrance of the explanation of Persian words, I shall avoid them as much as possible; but when they necessarily occur, I shall occasionally mention their signification, tho' the same words should have been already explained in other parts of this work.

certain; he was however much incensed at his disappointment. What added to his resentment, was to see a person much younger than himself, and a relation of Babulu Khan, without either experience or abilities, placed in his command. Under these circumstances, Nadir demanded of the Khan the reasons of so unjust a conduct; and with a ferocity peculiar to him, made no scruple to declare his opinion, that the Khan had not acted as a man of honour. This insolent behaviour obliged the governor to alter his conduct; so that from the highest commendations of Nadir's valour, he condemned him to be beaten, in the severest manner, on the soles of his feet^c. What contributed to this disgrace, was the envy of Nadir's abilities as a soldier, among several officers of distinction in the Persian troops. It is easy to imagine that a man of so imperious a spirit, could but ill brook such indignities; he therefore retired from Meshed to seek some new adventure.

C H A P. XL.

Nadir retires to Kælat, and is well received by his uncle. From thence he retreats to the mountains, where he forms a strong party, and robs for several years. The Afghans take Isfahan. Sef O Din Beg deserts Shah Tæhmas. Nadir's uncle obtains a pardon for his nephew of the Shah. Nadir's treacherous conduct in seizing Kælat; he beats a strong party of the Afghans, takes Nichabur, and reinforces his army with 1000 men.

NADIR being thus turned loose into the world, applied his thoughts immediately how to retrieve his fortunes, and do himself that justice, which he could not obtain of Babulu Khan. His uncle^d, a chief of one of the tribes of the Afshars, commanded at Kælat, a strong hold, about ten days journey from Meshed: to him he applied, and complained of the hard treatment he had met with in the king's service.

^c This is common to persons of the highest rank in Persia. See Vol. I. Chap. XXXVIII.

^d It may perhaps seem strange, that Nadir's father should be a cap-maker, and his uncle chief of a tribe, and governor of Kælat; but not so strange as Nadir's own fortune. When, and by what means, the uncle became chief of a tribe, I know not; but it is not so difficult to comprehend, how one brother may be in easy circumstances, and the other poor; whilst we see so many revolutions in human affairs in Europe, and many more in Asia.

service. His uncle entertained him for some time, till by his intrigues he began to discover ambitious designs, and Nadir thus becoming an object of jealousy, was obliged to retire.

Nadir was now determined to seek a support by the arts of violence, in which he was a thorough proficient; experience having taught him, that he could not procure a subsistence in a manner suitable to his vast desires, by any other means. It is probable, he had already planned a design of getting possession of Kælat; however, he retired, for the third time, into the mountains, where he returned to his old trade of robbery.

Maghmud having invaded Persia, and compelled the unfortunate Hussein to yield up his capital, together with his diadem, the provinces were involved in great confusion and distress: this afforded the better opportunity to Nadir, to collect a body of men of desperate fortunes, many of whom had already served under him as soldiers. After robbing several caravans, he soon acquired riches enough to bring together the number of seven or eight hundred men of approved resolution; and having fixed a rendezvous in the mountains, they made incursions into Khorasan, and the adjacent provinces, laying the country under such contributions as they pleased to impose. 1722.

The Afghans, though in possession of Isfahan, were not sufficiently numerous to make a rapid conquest of the whole empire; several provinces and cities in the heart of it, as well as the frontiers, refused to submit; and thereby cut them out work for some time. As to Tæhmas, the fourth son of Hussein^w, who made his escape from Isfahan, and was now considered as the lawful heir of the Persian monarchy, he was rather a fugitive himself, than in a capacity of supporting order and government in those provinces not yet subjected to the Afghans; and was now content with an obscure life, in the province of Mazanderan. In the interim, the Turks seized upon the provinces in the west and south west; and the Russians conquered the western coast of the Caspian, including great part of Ghilan. However, as soon as Tæhmas was informed that the king his father had abdicated his right to the sovereignty; he, in quality 1724.

^w His first son was Seffie Myrza, whom the ministers of Shah Hussein had once caused to be confined, from an apprehension that he had too much courage and sagacity to suffer that infamous administration, for which they were so distinguished; and it is presumed that that prince was afterwards put to death by the Afghans.

quality of successor, took the title of Shah, by which name we shall call him, tho' he can hardly be said to have been more than a nominal king.

1726. Whilst he was negotiating secret treaties with the provinces that professed any fidelity to him, or sending embassies to implore the assistance of the neighbouring states, Nadir extended his lawless sovereignty in the eastern frontiers, living on spoil; and exacting what he thought necessary for the support of himself and his followers.

1727. About five years passed under these circumstances; when, at length, Tæhmas collected a little army, but his father's fortune still pursued him. One of his principal generals, Sef O Din Beg, a chief of the Bayots*, having given some offence, and being apprehensive of punishment, fled from Tæhmas's camp with the troops under his command, which were no less than 1500 men, and joined Nadir Kouli, who was then in the same province of Khorasan. The union of their forces composed a body of 2 or 3000 men, which the adjacent country was compelled to support: this formidable body was within 30 leagues of Kælat, so that Nadir's uncle began to be much alarmed, lest his nephew should attempt to dislodge him from his strong hold: in order, therefore, to support a good understanding, he wrote to him in very obliging terms, intimating that he had now a fair opportunity of making his fortune, by engaging in the service of his lawful sovereign Shah Tæhmas; who, he was sure would pardon him, and all his followers. Nadir seemed to relish the proposal, and desired his uncle to procure the king's pardon, which he would gladly accept: accordingly the uncle represented the case to the Shah, who, tho' he knew Nadir to be a most notorious offender, yet as he was in great need of so brave and experienced an officer, with so considerable a body of men, immediately signed his pardon, and sent it to Kælat.

The uncle no sooner received this writing, than he dispatched it to his nephew; upon the receipt of which, Nadir Kouli set out for Kælat, in company with Sef O Din Beg, under an escort of 100 men of his best troops. He had now a convenient opportunity of exercising his genius in the art of treachery. His uncle received him with great kindness, and entertained him and his followers as persons to whom he had done a signal service, and from whom consequently he apprehended no harm; at the same time he shewed them all the

* These are the inhabitants of Destr Bayad, a district in Kouhestan.

the honour and regard due to persons of rank and condition. Nadir, on the other hand, had not forgot the indignities offered him five years before ; neither was he ignorant of the motives of his uncle in procuring the pardon, nor of the king's views in granting it : but whatever moral considerations ought to have influenced his conduct, his thirst of power silenced the dictates of conscience : so that he determined to embrace the opportunity of an hospitable reception, and the specious pretence of an obliged guest, to make a sacrifice of his benefactor. For this purpose he had left orders that 500 more of his best men should follow him the next day, and conceal themselves near the fortress of Kælat, and there be ready at a signal appointed:

Having thus concerted his measures, the second night after his arrival he ordered his 100 men within the castle to kill the centries, and shut up the rest of the garrison, to the number of 200 men, in their barracks, whilst he went himself into his uncle's chamber and murdered him. As soon as he made the signal, his 500 men were let in at the gates, and he became absolute master of the fortress without shedding much blood. Those of the garrison, who did not chuse to share his fortune, he set at liberty. The next day he dispatched messengers with the news of his success, ordering the remainder of his men to join him ; and now instead of changing his residence continually, as the apprehensions of an enemy, or other reasons of convenience might render necessary, he established his head-quarters in this fortress. Kælat includes a considerable spot of ground, the natural situation of which, with the assistance of some art, has rendered it almost inaccessible. He continued there for several months, levying contributions. The success of this enterprize was the more grateful to him, as this place was not far distant from that of his birth : his poor relations and friends in the neighbourhood were relieved by his bounty, and the humanity with which he treated most of the inhabitants of the adjacent country, induced numbers to enlist themselves in his troops ; so that from this time he in some measure appeared as an independent sovereign, especially as Shah Tæhmas's authority was not acknowledged at Mesched, Meluck Maghmud, an Abdollee chief, having got possession of that city.

Nadir being thus become formidable, carried his views beyond the plunder of defenceless peasants : he aspired at the delivery of his country from her foreign enemies, particularly the Afghans, who had lorded it over the Persians with the utmost barbarity for five years : but altho' he appeared as a

sovereign, he did not pretend to wage war against the Afghans in any other name than that of Shah Tæhmas. As he was conscious that the Shah must have greatly resented his killing his uncle, under pretence of accepting the royal pardon, he resolved to do some signal action in behalf of the king, that might obliterate the remembrance of his conduct at Kælat.

With this view he prepared for an expedition against the Afghans, who were masters of the neighbouring city Nichabur^y, where they had a garrison of above 3000 men. Nadir's forces exceeded this number, but being unaccustomed to sieges, and desirous of action in the field, he determined to make use of a stratagem to draw the enemy out of their garrison: the Afghans, who considered Nadir rather as a free-booter, than the general of a formidable body of forces, apprehended no great danger from his neighbourhood. Their troops, to the number of 600, were securely marauding, when Nadir detached about that number of his cavalry, who attacked them unexpectedly, and cut them to pieces: upon this, the governor with his whole garrison issued forth to fall upon the Persians, who immediately retreated towards Ban-rahad, a defile in the mountains, which separates the provinces of Khorasan and Astrabad; this was the rendezvous appointed. The Afghans pursued them for several leagues^z, till they came to this defile: Nadir, in the interim, marched with 1500 of his men, and under the favour of a wood, which covers these mountains, he concealed his men at the entrance of the pass. The Afghans, not suspecting any other enemy to be near, followed the 600 men with an impatience of resenting the loss they had just sustained at Nichabur. As soon as they had well entered the defile, which is very narrow, the 600 Persians faced about, whilst Nadir with his body of 1500 men, fell upon them in rear, with such impetuosity, that the astonished Afghans incapable of acting with their cavalry, and suspecting themselves surrounded by a great army, became an easy prey, and few of them escaped the slaughter.

After dividing the spoil taken upon this occasion, Nadir returned to Nichabur, the gates of which were opened to him: he took possession of it in the name of Shah Tæhmas, charging

^y Nichabur, sometimes called Iran, was formerly the capital of Khorasan, till Abas the Great established the tomb of Imam Kouli Riza at Mesched.

^z The entrance of this defile is about eight or ten leagues distance from Nichabur.

charging his troops not to injure any of the inhabitants, declaring that his intentions were to deliver them from the tyranny and usurpation of the Afghans, and to support them in their fidelity to their true sovereign; as he knew that necessity only had induced them to submit to their late masters. The effects belonging to the Afghans he divided among his soldiers; and the humanity with which he treated the inhabitants, was so remarkable, that without forcing a single person to join him, he obtained a reinforcement of near 1000 men.

C H A P. XLI.

Nadir Kouli hears of the distress of Shah Tæhmas at Farabad; desires his pardon, and obtains it. He joins his forces with those under the command of Fatey Ali Khan, whom he afterwards kills, and acquires the sole command of the army. He conducts Shah Tæhmas to Nichabur, and from thence to Mesched. Shah Tæhmas's devotion in that city.

WHILST Nadir was preparing at Nichabur for new expeditions, he received intelligence that Shah Tæhmas was reduced to great extremities. This prince had been pent up in Mazanderan, as a kind of dependent on Fatey Ali Khan Khajar^a, who had during the troubles taken possession of that province, which being fortified by the mountains that surround it, the inhabitants refused to submit to the dominion of the Afghans. Tæhmas in the mean while treated with the Turks and the Russians, but he was so far from receiving succours from either, that they had divided great part of his dominions, as already mentioned: he was therefore obliged to take up his quarters at Farabad^b; from whence, in case of danger to his person, he could embark on the Caspian Sea. These circumstances were favourable to Nadir, who made no doubt of procuring a full pardon for all his offences: this he had the more reason to expect, as his last action against the Afghans had increased his military reputation, and made him considered, in some measure, as the instrument of providence for the delivery of his

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country.

^a This Khan was a native of Astrabad, whose inhabitants, as I have explained in Vol. I. Chap. XLIV. are distinguished by the name of Khajars.

^b This is the place mentioned in Vol. I. Chap. XXXII.

country. Having therefore caused his forces to advance to the confines of Mazanderan, he sent to acquaint the Shah of the affair at Nichabur, and that himself and his troops were entirely at his majesty's service; adding, that he desired to have the honour of waiting upon the king, to whom he would give an account of the reasons of his conduct at the fortress of Kælat, which he held at the king's orders. Tho' Tæhmas had received impressions much to the disadvantage of Nadir, proposals of this nature seemed to promise some happy event, and were highly satisfactory; he therefore made answer, that Nadir might come with all security, and should be received as his faithful servant. Accordingly Nadir, leaving his troops at some distance, set out with an escort of 100 cavalry for Farabad.

Fatey Ali Khan Khajar^c having, as already mentioned, taken possession of the province of Mazanderan, as also of Astrabad, headed a strong party of Khajars, who are a very warlike people. Tæhmas sent a body of forces against him, whom the Khajars repulsed: but upon the king's taking a solemn oath to pardon them all, and that he would never, upon any consideration, touch the life of Fatey Ali Khan Khajar, but always treat him as a faithful servant; the Khan on his part swore allegiance, and the Khajars, who were naturally attached to the Sheffie family, became the only safeguard of the king: they even engaged, that as soon as a favourable opportunity should offer, they would recover Meshched out of the hands of the rebel Meluck Maghmud. For this purpose Fatey Ali Khan had recommended Nadir to the king, as a very gallant officer, and one whose assistance was much to be desired; he therefore received Nadir with open arms, and offered his service to introduce him to his majesty. Nadir's escort made but a contemptible figure with regard to their apparel and accoutrements, their merit consisting only in their strength and valour. He saw that the Khan was treated with the respect of a sovereign prince, whilst Tæhmas had only the name of such; and tho' he naturally considered his own merit as much superior to that of the Khan, yet, not to appear his rival, he affected great humility, and would not even sit in the Khan's presence without great importunity.

Nadir being introduced to Shah Tæhmas, acknowledged the great obligations he was under to his majesty for the free
pardon

^c This is the father of Mahommed Hassan, by whom I was robbed in 1744, of whose conduct there is an ample account in Vol. I. Chap. XLIV.

pardon which had been granted him ; that however strange his conduct might appear, the death of his uncle was so far from being a contempt of the royal clemency, that it ought to be considered as an expression of his gratitude to the king ; for that the Castle of Kælat was now at his majesty's command, which he had very good reason to believe it would not have been, had his uncle remained in possession of it. He then related the affair of Nichabur, in which he made it evident, that he had given such a shock to the power of the Afghans in those parts, that it would very much facilitate the conquest of Herat ; and that he did not doubt but in a short time Fatey Ali Khan Khajar and himself should restore the kingdom to their majesties, the true descendents of the Sefies, whom those savage invaders the Afghans had so highly injured.

This discourse was uttered in so respectful a manner, mixed with so noble a boldness, that the Shah could not but express his satisfaction, and told him, he hoped the hour would come, when he should be able to reward his services in a manner suitable to his great merit. Nadir then obtained a pardon for Sef O Din Beg and all his followers, telling his majesty, that tho' he could not commend the appearance of his troops, he would answer for their experience, valour, and fidelity to their true sovereign.

Matters being thus adjusted to the mutual satisfaction of the Shah and his new general Nadir, his troops, which now consisted of 4 or 5000 men, were ordered to enter the province of Mazanderan, and to join those of Fatey Ali Khan Khajar, so that the whole constituted an army of above 8000 men. Nadir made it his study to cultivate a good correspondence with the Khan, and by his humble deportment insinuated himself so much, that there seemed to be no jealousy entertained of him ; whilst the superior genius which he demonstrated, gave him an apparent ascendancy in the esteem of the Shah.

In the interim Nadir, whose ambition could not bear an equal, much less a superior, had secretly instigated his creatures to complain of the conduct of the Khan, with respect to the good order and payment of the troops, and the extravagant price of their cloathing. He also watched the Khan very closely, and finding the king had already received impressions to the disadvantage of this general, he took a favourable opportunity of acquainting his majesty, that he had discovered a treacherous correspondence between the Khan, and Meluck Maghmud the rebel-governor of Mesched ; and

that, under pretence of conducting the Shah to the conquest of that city, as had been concerted, his intentions were to deliver him to Meluck Maghmud, on condition, that whilst the latter was to continue master of that city, together with the whole province, which their joint forces were to subdue, the Khan should remain in possession of the southren coast of the Caspian sea; and as a proof of what he advanced, he produced letters of the Khan, which he pretended to have intercepted.

It seemed improbable that the Khan should really have held such a correspondence, after having had Tæhmas in his hands for some time; nor is it believed, that any change of circumstances induced him to take such desperate measures: however, it was not the fortune of Tæhmas to be much wiser than his father Hufflein; and he gave the easier credit to the report, as he recollected that the Khan had been in arms against him not long before; and that Nadir, who had given such repeated proofs of his fidelity, could have no interest in deceiving him, to the ruin of that very man, who had so lately made a point of recommending him to his favour. Nadir affected a great concern, representing to the Shah, that his duty to his sovereign was prior to all other considerations; and moreover, that it was impossible his majesty could, with any consistency, entertain hopes of recovering his dominions, whilst he cherished a serpent in his bosom, and trusted himself in the hands of men devoid of fidelity.

Tæhmas, at length, believing the fact, was much perplexed with regard to the oath he had taken, never to hurt, much less to touch the life of, Fatey Ali Khan. To which Nadir replied; "If your majesty has taken an oath, I have not;" and thus, by a tacit consent, the ruin of the Khan was resolved. This general, not suspecting such an intrigue against his life, came to court as usual; when Nadir ordered a colonel^d, who was one of his creatures, to take an opportunity of killing him: but so great was the reputation of the Khan, and his presence so majestic, that the colonel was so much awed, that he put this business on his servant. Nadir having thus executed this pretended service to his master, carried out the head on a spear, and presented it to the soldiers, declaring the reason of the Khan's death, and that those who meant to be faithful to their sovereign, could not disapprove of the death of a traitor: that for his own part, he

^d This was the person whom I have mentioned in Vol. I. Chap. XLV.

he was resolved to sacrifice all the considerations of friendship and private interest, to the good of his country, and the restoration of his majesty to his dominions. These declarations, in some measure, satisfied those who were most attached to the deceased; some who affected to murmur, as if there had been foul play, and that the Khan had been cut off through the intrigues of Nadir and his creatures, were seized and confined.

Nadir having thus removed the bar to his ambition, as a reward for this signal service was constituted ^{1728.} a Khan^e, and had the command of the whole army given him: he now began to display all the talents of an able minister and a great general, so that Tæhmas trusted entirely to his conduct. He was a master of the art of improving advantages, and knew that his security, as well as the future advancement of his fortune, depended on that army, of which he was now the chief. As one of his peculiar characteristics was a piercing knowledge of men; he soon resolved which officers to discharge, and whom to put in their place: he gained the affections of the common soldiers by an unwearied attention to every circumstance that could tend to the promotion of their interest, particularly with regard to their being paid punctually, and buying their cloaths at an easy price. His first care was to engage his master to march his army into Khorasan, where he assured him the inhabitants were ready to take up arms against the common enemy.

The proper measures being taken to secure the pass of Banrahad, the army marched towards Nichabur, the king himself commanding in person. Tæhmas made his entrance there the 15th of May; on which occasion the inhabitants proclaimed their joy in the sincerest manner. Their wishes seemed to presage his restoration, which they were the more inclined to believe, from the pleasure they received in being the first city that was relieved from the yoke of the Afghans, at a time when they least expected so happy an event. It was an accession to their joy, that this revolution was brought about by a person whom they had considered only as a robber, and whose power as such they dreaded equally with that of the Afghans; but who was now verifying the assurances he had given them a few months before, that he meant to restore the Persian diadem to the true heir of Shah Sultan Hussein. The Afghans in those parts, disheartened by the

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great

* This made him Nadir Kouli Khan, but we do not find him called by that name, because he soon afterwards was honoured with the name of the Shah, and was called Tæhmas Kouli Khan.

great loss they had suffered in the affair of Banrahad, and unable to recruit, retired from the neighbourhood of Nichabur, without attempting to succour their ally Meluck Maghmud, governor of Mesched.

Under these circumstances, Nadir found no difficulty to augment the Shah's army; the anxious wishes of the people, to see themselves free from the yoke of the Afghans, and their desire of establishing their lawful sovereign, soon brought a strong reinforcement, so that this general was now at the head of near 18,000 men, a larger army than had for a long time appeared in those parts.

Nadir was impatient under every unnecessary delay, and prepared immediately to march with all his forces against the Abdollees, who under the command of Meluck Maghmud, had taken possession of Mesched: they no sooner heard of the defeat of the Afghans in the defile of Banrahad, and that Shah Tæhmas had entered Khorasan with a numerous army, than they began to prepare for a defence. But Mesched being a place of little or no strength, and the inhabitants entirely averse to the rebel government, they retired from that city; so that when Nadir arrived there with his troops, the Shah made a triumphant entrance, without effusion of blood. The citizens, delivered from oppression, received Tæhmas with the highest demonstrations of joy; and Nadir, who was personally known in that city, where Babulu Khan had some years before treated him with great indignity, was now loaded with honours. The present situation of Tæhmas's affairs, rendered him incapable of making his acknowledgments to Nadir in a pecuniary way; yet he was in the highest degree prodigal of his authority, as if he already meant to constitute him his sovereign, rather than his general. And as the highest mark of dignity which he could confer on him, according to the custom of the Persian kings, was to give him his own name, from henceforward he ordered him to be called Tæhmas Kouli Khan†; by which name we shall distinguish him, till he wrested the diadem from his master.

Tæhmas thus lavish of his favours, may be supposed to have acted upon principles of gratitude, as men of probity are generally inclined to think this a duty; but where the expression of this virtue is also an honour conferred on him who receives

† Some authors mention this event after the battle of Damgoon the next year; but it is probable that he might now have a double motive beside that of gratitude, as generosity, or policy, to make his name known in that of the general; which, if we judge from the event, was however a very false policy.

receives it, nothing can be more reasonable, than to expect a suitable return. However, he seemed to be ignorant, that when princes have nothing left to bestow, they seldom receive any return for those favours they have already conferred; nor is it strange that it should so happen with regard to princes, when we find it so almost every day in common life.

The prince, who partook much of the genius of his father, with regard to the religious turn of his mind, rejoiced at so favourable an opportunity of paying his devotion at the tomb of Imam^g Riza; for it had been long observed as a duty of the kings of Persia^h, to make a pilgrimage once in their life-time to this tomb, as the Turks do to Mecca and Medina. And the perils which he had gone through since the battle of Gulnabad, with his providential restoration, by means of his general Tæhmas Kouli Khan, naturally inspired his mind with a deeper sense of gratitude to heaven.

^g One of their prophets or chief expounders of their religion.

^h Shah Abas the Great, who was an able politician, as well as a great foldier, observing that the Persians carried great wealth out of his country every year in their pilgrimages to Mahommed's tomb, employed all his art to restore the reputation of Imam Riza; and not only discredited the notion of going out of their own country upon so long a journey, which in some measure was interdicting these pilgrimages, but knowing that his people had, as is indeed common among christians, a fond inclination to ascribe a more peculiar sanctity to some particular place; in order to shew them an example, he caused a very magnificent mosque to be built on the tomb of this prophet at Mesched, and made the pilgrimage himself with all his court. By thus shewing an example, Mesched became a place of great resort, and journeys to Arabia were out of fashion. The kings his successors made it a law to themselves, to begin their reign by a pilgrimage to this tomb; and in process of time, it was very rare for any Persian of the sect of Ali to make the pilgrimage of Mecca or Medina.

P A R T X.
FROM THE
Recovery of the whole Province of
KHORASAN in 1728,
TO THE
Expulsion of SULTAN ASHREFF out of
ISFAHAN in 1729.

C H A P. XLII.

Tæhmas Kouli Khan reduces Khorasan and Herat. He returns in triumph to Mefched, with the head of the governor of Herat. Shah Tæhmas sends an ambassador to the Ottoman court. The Turks send Suliman Effendi into Persia. Ashreff destroys Saiid Achmed Khan governor of Kherman, and prepares to attack Tæhmas Shah. Ashreff marches to Damgoon, and is defeated; he retreats to Isfahan, and encamps his troops at Mourtchakhor.

WHILST Tæhmas Shah was offering up his prayers to the deity, Tæhmas Kouli Khan presented incense to his idols of ambition and military glory, the only deities he seemed to reverence. Reasons of policy might justly induce Tæhmas Shah to remain at Mefched, till his army should be in a condition to march towards Isfahan: and it was natural for his general Tæhmas Kouli Khan, to recommend this step, as it left him at liberty to act with the more boundless authority in the army. The country of Khorasan was well known to him in every part, in consequence of the many excursions he had made, as an officer in the army, as well as the chief of a band of robbers. The beginning of this year he marched at the head of a considerable body of forces, to reduce the other cities and towns of the province, which had revolted, and established an independent government, or submitted to the Afghans.

The

The news of Shah Tæhmas having entered Mefched in triumph, where he now took up his residence, facilitated the enterprizes of Tæhmas Kouli Khan; so that the greatest part of the towns and villages sent deputations, and professed themselves entirely devoted to the interest of their lawful sovereign. Before this year was ended, we find all the vast country of Khorasan subjected, and the Afghans obliged to retire, without daring to give battle. Nadir returned to Mefched, not so much out of inclination, as to make an appearance of respect for his master, and to consult about the future operations of the war.

It was about ten years since the inhabitants of Herat, which is near the frontiers of Khorasan, had in consequence of the victory obtained by the young Ezadallah, shaken off the Persian yoke, and erected themselves into a kind of republic¹, together with the whole province of that name. It does not appear, that this young usurper yet remained in that government, which he had been the great instrument of forming, tho' he had for some time maintained the chief office in it. It is certain, however, that this republic became formidable to the neighbouring country, and was at this very time meditating the invasion of Khorasan: but the success which Tæhmas Kouli Khan had against the Afghans at Nichabur, and afterwards through the whole province of Khorasan, put a bar to the execution of their project.

Tæhmas Kouli Khan having represented to the Shah, the facility with which he could reduce Herat, obtained a permission to march to that province, with about 12000 men: he no sooner encamped under the walls of the city, than the inhabitants naturally inconstant, and diffident of their ability to oppose the fortune and valour of Tæhmas Kouli Khan, submitted to him, and delivered up their chief, together with the garrison². The Persian general having caused the former to be beheaded, left a garrison in Herat; he treated the inhabitants with so judicious a mixture of mildness and severity, according to their different circumstances, that he seemed to have secured their allegiance; he then prepared to

¹ It is presumed, as they were in alliance with the Afghans, whose seat of empire was Isfahan, and that the Abdoltees of Herat were in some measure tributary to them.

² This action has been represented as a battle, in which the Abdoltees had 30,000 men; but I could never find any authority for that report, as a fourth part of that number in such a province would be considered a great army, under such distressed circumstances as the empire was then in.

to march back to Mefched, agreeably to the orders he had received from the Shah. Being returned victorious, with the head of the late governor of Herat, he began to form a more important enterprize, than that of marching southward thro' the deserts of Segeftan, as the Afghans had done five years before.

In order to detach the Turks from the interest of Afhreff, whom they had with great reluctance acknowledged as sovereign of Persia; Tæhmas had in the mean time sent an ambassador to the Ottoman court. This minister was received with more regard than he expected; for the news of Tæhmas Kouli Khan's exploits having reached Constantinople, gave the Turks a good impression of the state of the affairs of Shah Tæhmas. Tho' their interest was concerned to see Persia humbled, yet they did not much incline to support an usurper, whose imperious spirit had carried him so far as to pretend to an equality with the grand signior. But in order to be informed more minutely of circumstances so interesting to them, they sent Suliman Effendi, an officer of trust into Persia; of whom they soon learnt, that Tæhmas already master of Khorasan and Herat, with a considerable army of choice troops, and a general of great reputation at their head, seemed to promise an approaching change in the Persian empire.

In the mean time Afhreff, after giving a check to 1729. a Turkish army, tho' it was the effect of accident rather than military strength, dreaded no evil from the fugitive Tæhmas: he often mentioned him in terms so contemptuous, that to appearance he had persuaded himself of the impossibility of being molested by him.

After a tedious siege, he had at length made himself master of Yezd, which at different times had cost the Afghans much blood; Khermania had also submitted to him. Saiid Achmed Khan, who was a near relation of the royal blood of the Sheffies, during the troubles had established an independent sovereignty in Khermania, of which Afhreff had not leisure to dispossess him by force of arms; but Saiid being in want of money to pay an army, and the impoverished state of the province making it impossible to raise sufficient contributions for that purpose, his forces at length deserted him. He then submitted

* This action has been represented as a battle, in which the Abdoles had 30,000 men; but I could never find any authority for that report, as a fourth part of that number in such a province would be considered a great army, under such distressed circumstances as the empire was then in.

submitted to Ashreff, who was not only the nearest potentate, but the only one who seemed to have any regal authority: desiring him, however, to remember that he had only acted upon the same principles as Ashreff himself, and therefore hoped to be received with the respect due to his quality, and with all security to his person; upon condition of which he professed an entire devotion to the service of this Afghan prince.

Ashreff promised the Khan his protection, under the sanction of sacred oaths, and let him know that he might repair to Shirafs, with the people under his command, in all possible security: but no sooner was he arrived there, than the governor sent him prisoner to Isfahan, where he was beheaded. The province of Khermania, and the country on the sea coast quite to Bender Abassi, thus becoming subject to Ashreff, his dominions were extended farther than he had forces to guard them; for the cruelties and depredations committed from the Afghan invasion till this time, having impoverished the inhabitants to an extreme degree, he was in no capacity to maintain an army sufficiently numerous to support his authority over so vast a tract of country. As to the Persian soldiers, they were as reluctant to enter into the service of the Afghans, as the Afghans were diffident of their fidelity; and from Kandahar recruits could hardly be expected in great numbers; for Hussein Khan, the governor of that province, since the murder of his brother Mir Maghmud in Isfahan, considered Ashreff rather as an enemy than a friend; and presuming that he might shortly be driven out of Persia, he would hardly send him recruits, lest by that means he might retire into Kandahar, and with the same authority that he put Maghmud to death, claim the sovereignty of that province.

Spiritual and temporal power being interwoven in the closest manner by the Mahommedan law, the grand signior is supposed to reign over the Turks in quality of Imam¹, and successor of the Caliphs. From hence he claims an authority over all Mahommedans of the sect of the Sunnis, so that Ashreff, who was of that sect, could not with any consistency refuse to acknowledge him as such, without affecting an independent power. However, he artfully contrived to make his submission procure him what was more essential; for he obtained from the Turks the acknowledgement of his being sovereign of Persia, and of his holding that dignity and power according to law: and having thus made a puissant protector

of

¹ Chief of religion.

of a formidable enemy, he lulled himself into a security, as if his dominion was built on the most solid basis. He had given Rechid Basfa, the Turkish ambassador, the kindest reception, and shewed him many marks of honour, during his residence at Isfahan.

Not to be wanting in a suitable return, the Turks made great preparations for the reception of the ambassador of Ashreff, who arrived at Constantinople in July this year. Greater rejoicings could not have been made for the reception of a sovereign prince returning in triumph. It is however very remarkable, that this Afghan affected a contempt of all the grand appearances, the military shews, and the roaring of cannon; for without looking on one side or the other, as he entered Constantinople, he continued to read his khoran. It is natural to presume from this incident, that he endeavoured to raise the reputation of his countrymen for great sanctity, and a divine zeal for the Mahomedan law, as practised by the Turks: this sort of conduct had been the chief cause, a short time before, of saving his master Ashreff, together with the Afghan army, from destruction; but the ambassador now over-acted his part, and gave the Turks impressions to the disadvantage of his nation.

Ashreff in the mean while enjoyed the sweets of peace. The love of pleasure is natural to mankind, and freedom from toil is generally supposed the best means to arrive at it. This prince was certainly a man of parts, very circumspect, and an intrepid soldier: but like most other Oriental warriors of distinction, he had no sense of any moral obligation. He seemed now to be arrived at the highest point that the nature of his affairs would admit; and therefore it was natural to give some indulgence to his favourite passions. However he kept part of his troops in the field, whilst he followed the exercises of hunting, and gratified his inclination in building. As to the pleasures of women, they are but an ordinary consequence of Mahomedan voluptuousness, especially when it is supported by an unlimited authority.

This prince, who had hitherto considered Nadir Kouli in no other light than as a robber, began now to look upon him as a formidable enemy. Shah Tæhmas had been so much the ridicule of the court of Isfahan, that the news of his successes in the eastern parts of the empire did not seem to give the least alarm to the soldiers, nor even to the officers of the army. They gave him the name of Sek Zade, in allusion to the word Cheik^m Zade, the latter being son of the king, and the

^m Cheik Eidar was the first founder of the Seffie dynasty.

the former son of a bitch : at the same time they expressed great satisfaction, that they should at length have an opportunity of getting him into their hands. However proper it might be to encourage the common soldiers to think thus contemptibly of their enemy ; Ashreff, who had certain intelligence of his force, and the valour of his troops, thought it high time to provide for the storm that threatened him : he therefore caused all the forces, as well those on the frontiers, as in the heart of his dominions, to be joined to the garrison of Isfahan. And in order to prevent any insurrection in favour of Tæhmas at Cashan, Koom, Casbin, Tæhيران, Yezd, and other great cities and towns in his jurisdiction, he ordered all the Persian inhabitants, who were capable of bearing arms, to leave their habitations and retire, under pain of death : he did the same at Isfahan.

Having made this disposition, his whole force did not exceed 30,000 men, some of which were Darguzzisⁿ and Hassarais^o ; a force, however, not much inferior to that by which his predecessor had obtained the Persian diadem. About the beginning of September, he encamped his army without the walls of Isfahan ; in which city he left 200 of his men in garrison, thinking that small number sufficient to keep this once vast capital in awe : for so miserably was this unhappy city reduced, by the incessant massacres committed by Maghmud and himself, that few of its inhabitants were left, except old men, women, and children. In a few days he began his march, with the ordinary pomp of a Persian king. He directed his course by Cashan and Koom, to the plains of Damgoon, in the province of Coumas ; where he arrived towards the close of the month, after having marched about 400 miles^p. His intention was to have proceeded towards Khorasan, and by attacking Tæhmas in his new-established empire, prevent his accumulating more strength.

Tæhmas Kouli Khan had employed the greatest part of this year in augmenting and disciplining his troops. In the former he met with some difficulties, for the people not having yet worn off the impressions, which the valour of the Afghans had made on them, and knowing that they were to come to action immediately, joined him but slowly. He had

ⁿ I presume, the inhabitants of Derghefin in the neighbourhood of Hamadan.

^o These people are supposed to come from the eastern parts of Cabul.

^p When I write miles without distinction, I mean English miles.

had, however, collected an army of near 25000^a men; in the compleating, as well as disciplining of which, he had given such proofs of his abilities, as inspired his master with the greatest assurance of success. The measures which Ashreff had taken, to prevent any revolt in favour of Tæhmas, had occasioned many to offer their service to this prince; for as they had been turned out of their habitations, resentment as well as necessity, carried them where they were sure of being received.

The Shah, thus upon the point of being restored to the throne of his ancestors, and urged by an impatient desire to revenge the disgrace of his father, and the blood of so many thousands of his subjects, had proposed to march to Isfahan, and compel Ashreff to give him battle; but this design was laid aside. His sagacious general represented to him, the inconveniencies that would attend the length of the march; and moreover, that the measures which Ashreff had taken at Isfahan, were certain indications that he meant to seek his majesty; and consequently, that the Afghans would be more hurt by the fatigue of their march, than benefited by the junction of fresh forces, seeing that Ashreff had already collected all in whom he thought it safe to confide; he observed likewise, that the further he came from Isfahan, the more difficult and the more dangerous would be his retreat. However, not to bring the war into Khorasan, nor loose any advantages which his majesty's faithful subjects the Khajars, Bayots, or any of the neighbouring countries might afford, it was determined to make some advance to meet Ashreff. After slow marches, he accordingly arrived with the king, and the whole army, near the city of Damgoon, before Ashreff had entered those plains. This situation was not far from that vast ridge of mountains, which run eastward along the south coast of the Caspian Sea, which being well known to Kouli Khan, in case of an extremity he could make a safe retreat. Having leisure to chuse his ground, he had already encamped his forces, and refreshed his men for some days, when Ashreff approached with his whole army.

The Afghans had been accustomed for some time to slaughter the Persians, rather than to engage with them; and to put them to flight by their shouts, and the fierceness of their attack, rather than by their superior strength and knowledge of arms. As they were now equally confident of victory, they urged their general to begin the attack. Ashreff how-

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^a Some writers make them much under this number, and some much above it.

ever soon discovered from the advantageous situation of the Persian army, that he had to do with a general of experience, and against whom he must proceed with great caution, especially as his fate seemed to depend on the issue of the battle. Whilst he was thus unresolved, his officers represented to him, that upon the first report which should be spread of their being afraid to attack the Persians, the peasants would no longer bring provisions to their camp, and that they should be compelled to fight hereafter at a greater disadvantage.

Ashreff having therefore made a proper disposition of his forces, on the 2d of October attacked the Persian army with that impetuosity, which the Afghans had generally found successful. The Persian troops stood the shock, without giving way in the least, returning their fire with perfect order, so that the Afghans could make no impression on them. Ashreff surprized, tho' not disconcerted, at the discipline and silence of the Persian troops, brought off his squadrons from the charge, and had recourse to the expedient which he found of great use in his late action against the Turks. He detached two bodies, each of 3000 men, commanded by the most experienced officers in his army, and ordered them to take a circuit, and charge the enemy in rear and flank, whilst he attacked them in front. Tæhmas Kouli Khan, watchful in every quarter, prepared to receive the enemy; and repulsed them with such valour, as flung them into great confusion. After a general discharge of his artillery, it was his turn to attack; and falling furiously upon the Afghans, he obtained an easy victory.

What loss was sustained on each side is uncertain. It may be presumed that of the Afghans was very considerable^p: their camels, harquebusses, with all their tents and baggage, fell into the hands of the conqueror. The Afghans fled to Tæhيران, which they reached in about two days, tho' the distance is near 200 miles; from whence, after pillaging the inhabitants, and refreshing themselves, they made forced marches to Isfahan.

The day after the arrival of the Afghan army, Ashreff commanded all the people of his nation, inhabiting that city, to retire with their effects into the citidal^q: these orders were executed in such a tumultuous manner, that it appeared as if the city had been taken by assault: the Afghans drove

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^p As they carried off only 12,000 men from Isfahan, their loss here must have been near 10,000.

^q An inclosed building, which had been made since the invasion of the Afghans.

the other inhabitants from their houses, destroying most of their effects which were not portable, and pillaging the shops of every thing that was valuable. After which, Ashreff retired with his troops to Mourtchakhor^r, where he encamped in an advantageous situation.

C H A P. XLIII.

Tæhmas Kouli Khan engages the Shah to remain at Tæhيران. The battle of Mourtchakhor. Ashreff murders Shah Hussein, and flies from Isfahan. The city taken by the Persian army. The Persians revenge themselves on the Afghans. Shah Tæhmas enters Isfahan, and gives his general Tæhmas Kouli Khan, the power of raising money.

TÆHMAS Kouli Khan, now jealous of his glory, proceeded with the utmost care, to prevent a reverse of his fortune. The Shah, thinking himself secure of victory over the fugitive Afghans, impatiently desired to see Isfahan. Tæhmas Kouli Khan, on the other hand, seemed to act as if he was apprehensive, that his sovereign would come in for too great a share in the reputation of his victories, and that his soldiers would consider themselves as acting rather under their king, than under their general. This neither consisted with his desire of independency in the command of the army; nor with his ambition and thirst of applause. He therefore took occasion to represent to the Shah, that his majesty's presence was no longer necessary to encourage his troops, since it was evident from their superiority at Damgoon, that the enemy was rather to be despised than feared; and he did not make the least doubt, that he should soon exterminate them; that so much depended on the precious life of their sovereign, that should any misfortune happen to him, his subjects could have no security of being relieved from the tyrannic yoke of the Afghans; that the courage which his majesty demonstrated, at the same time that it engaged the love and admiration of his subjects, made them more anxious for the preservation of a life, of such inestimable value; that this was the sense of the army in general, which humbly intreated him to remain at Tæhiran, with a guard of six or eight thousand men.

These

This place is about 25 miles eastward of Isfahan, according to report; but De Lisle does not mention it in his map.

These reasons made an impression upon the Shah ; he had an entire confidence in his general, and therefore suffered him to gather those laurels, which he might indeed have justly claimed as deliverer of his country, had he acted upon honest principles. He accordingly marched without obstruction, proclaiming his victory in the name of Shah Tæhmas, and was every where received with acclamations of joy. He soon found his troops considerably augmented by crowds, who now voluntarily offered their service, to give a finishing stroke to the ruin of the Afghans.

In the mean time, Ashreff, expecting to be attacked, had made every preparation necessary to receive the enemy : not only his sovereignty, but his life depended on the event. In the flattering hopes of repairing his loss at Damgoon, he exerted all his skill in the choice of a proper situation for his camp ; in erecting batteries for his cannon ; in covering them by intrenchments ; and making the most advantageous disposition of his troops.

The 13th of November, early in the morning, Tæhmas Kouli Khan appeared with his army in order of battle : the Persians marched up to the Afghans, and sustained the whole force of their musquetry, and part of their cannon, without disorder. Being come close to the enemy, they, in their turn, gave a general discharge. So regular and intrepid an attack, might have disconcerted troops enured to the severest discipline. The astonished Afghans seeing such numbers fall, that hardly a single bullet failed of execution^t, thought only of saving their lives by flying precipitately from the field of battle. The loss they sustained on this occasion, was not less than 4000 men. The greatest part of the Afghans who fled, reached Isfahan by three in the afternoon, and Ashreff himself, with a small number, returned at night. They pretended to have obtained a victory; but the cries and lamentations of their women and children in the citadel, soon discovered the contrary. There was also great confusion in other parts of the city; insomuch that the miserable inhabitants, remembering the threats of the Afghans, in case a misfortune should at any time befall them; expected nothing less than a general massacre. But the panic which had seized the Afghans, diverted them from any such cruel purpose if they ever intended it:

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Ashreff;

^t The Persians are excellent marksmen, and when they keep good order, they take aim, and must necessarily do great execution.

Ashreff, however, found time to glut his revenge, by imbruing his hands in the blood of Shah Hussein. This unfortunate prince, whom Mir Maghmud with all his horrid barbarity had spared, at length fell a sacrifice to the disappointment and rage of this cruel Afghan. Others of the royal blood are supposed to have fallen also on this occasion; as to the daughters and female relations of Hussein, he took them from the harram, determining to carry them off with him.

The Afghans, having now no other expedient, prepared for flight, and were busied in collecting their spoil. Besides the number of beasts of burthen, to accommodate their women and baggage, they loaded several mules, and near 300 camels, mostly with the treasures and rich effects of the royal palace. As soon as night came on they left the city, in number about 12000, after having reigned as conquerors of Persia, seven years and twenty one days. Ashreff perhaps startled with the groans of the dying Hussein, or having his whole mind employed in collecting his treasure, or providing for his own security, had forgotten that the inactivity of the Persian general, afforded an opportunity of glutting his revenge by some more signal cruelty; but he had not marched two leagues, when he sent back his Athemat Doulet, with a chosen party, it was supposed with orders to fire the city, and massacre all those who might come in their way. This party was advanced to the royal gardens, within a mile of Isfahan, when some among the common people, concluding they were not come for any good purpose, collected several drums, which they beat in such a manner, that the Afghans, apprehensive that the Persian troops had already entered the town, fled back without doing any mischief, and continued their rout towards Shirafs.

This precipitate retreat having left the capital unguarded, the peasants of the neighbouring country, as well as the inhabitants, began not only to pillage the houses which were abandoned, but also to rob one another: which unbridled licentiousness created an infinite confusion. Two days past under these melancholy circumstances, in which the weak were obliged to yield to the strong, without any recourse to either civil or military authority.

The sixteenth of November, Tæhmas Kouli Khan detached a body of one thousand five hundred men, to disperse the mob, and take possession of the royal palace, and gates
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of the city, in order to his own entrance. It may seem difficult to account for his not following the Afghans, after the battle of Mourtchakhor, which might have prevented their carrying off the riches of Isfahan: but we are to consider Tæhmas Kouli Khan, as unbiassed by any particular affection for the Persians; that his glory was not arrived to maturity; and that, besides the duty of a general to act cautiously with so artful an enemy as the Afghans, if we may judge from his conduct after he arrived at Isfahan, it is reasonable to conclude, his design was to husband the war, that his office as generalissimo might not become unnecessary.

As soon as the Khan entered the city, he took the proper measures for quieting the tumults of the people, occasioned by the pillage already mentioned; and ordered a diligent search for all the Afghans, whom necessity or choice had induced to remain there. Of these, numbers had concealed themselves in the houses of their relations or friends, in hopes to elude the search. Many of them were brought into the public places and executed: these were a kind of victims to the souls of thousands, who had been starved to death by the ambitious policy of Maghmud, or for the same reasons butchered in cold blood, during the reign of the Afghans. It is remarkable however, that Tæhmas Kouli Khan pardoned all those, of whom the inhabitants of the city made a fair report, with regard to the humane manner in which they had executed their respective offices. In the interim, he received a deputation from the Afghans of Casbin: these not only offered their allegiance to Shah Tæhmas, but also their service as soldiers, and to engage immediately in his army. Such a reinforcement could not but prove agreeable to the Persian general, so that in the name of his master he promised them a kind reception.

The spirit of revenge did not stop with the slaughter of the Afghans of Isfahan: the people were furious at the sight of every object that could raise in their minds the least remembrance of their past sufferings. Maghmud, when he was near his natural death, was taken off by violence as related; yet, as he was the founder of the dominion of the Afghans in Persia, they had at a considerable expence erected a magnificent mausoleum to his memory. This edifice, according to the custom of the east, was built in a grove, and inclosed with a wall. Though this

prince had been so inhuman a murderer, yet the superstition of the partners in his victories, induced them to offer their prayers at his tomb. This increased the indignation of the inhabitants of Isfahan, and added to their desire of destroying it. Having obtained the permission of the Khan for this purpose, they levell'd this edifice to the ground, with the fury of an enraged mob; they would not even suffer the repose of his bones; and to add yet a greater mark of contempt and abhorrence, in the very place on which this mausoleum had been erected, they built a public jakes.

Shah Tæhmas, who was still at Tæhيران, having received notice of what had passed at Isfahan, prepared to take possession of his capital. He marched at the head of the greatest part of the forces which were left with him, and arrived the 9th of December following at Gaze, a village about six miles distance from Isfahan. Here he was met by his general Tæhmas Kouli Khan; whom the Shah no sooner saw, than he alighted from his horse, as if he meant to pay him homage: the general dismounted also, and ran to him in a respectful manner, to prevent this great mark of condescension; but the Shah insisted upon walking a few paces with him, declaring that he could not shew too great a distinction to the person who had delivered his country, and driven his enemies from Isfahan. After a short conversation he mounted again, preceded by his running footmen^t; the Khan following just behind him at the head of his troops.

Tæhmas now made his entry into Isfahan, and was received with all those demonstrations of joy which the sudden change, from the execrable tyranny of the usurper Ashreff, to the gentle deportment of their legal sovereign could inspire. The remembrance of his misfortunes added all the tenderness of affectionate subjects, to the religious respect for the person of him who now appeared as the only survivor of the Sessie family. But the transports of his joy were in a great measure suppressed, when he heard of the fate of the king his father, and saw the palace, which eight years before contained all the splendor of a court, exhibiting only naked walls; the remembrance that he was restored to the throne of his ancestors, was not sufficient to silence the dictates of humanity, in a breast formed to gentle impressions; and though a king, he was not ashamed to weep. As soon as he entered the harram, an old woman threw her

arms

arms about his neck in great transports of joy ; as he knew that Ashreff had carried away his sisters and other relations, he was the more surprized to find this person to be his mother. This lady had, ever since the invasion of the Afghans, disguised herself in the habit of a slave, and submitted to all the offices of drudgery, which are ordinarily imposed on persons in that situation.

The king, after enjoying the satisfaction to find one of his parents alive, prepared himself for the duties of a sovereign prince. He received all those who appeared before him in so affable and obliging a manner, that he won them entirely to his interest ; and though their poverty was very great, they contributed as liberally as possible to the support of the army, which was increased to near forty thousand men. Tæhmas, whose tenderness of nature became his crime, instead of commanding his general to pursue and extirpate his enemies, gave way to a melancholy turn of thought. Tæhmas Kouli Khan took occasion from hence, to represent to him in a respectful manner, that his present situation ought to efface all remembrance of past disgraces ; the Shah replied to this effect : “ How is it possible that my heart should be open to joy ; are my own misfortunes, and those of my people to be forgotten, so long as the murderers of my father and brothers are yet at Shirafs, where my sisters and other female relations are held in slavery by the vile Afghans ? ” This was, in fact, to reproach Tæhmas Kouli Khan for his inactivity ; for it was in his breast to have pursued them, without giving them the least time to form any future project ; but this general, true to his own principles, foresaw that the remembrance of his services would wear out of the minds of the people, unless to the office of generalissimo, he could add that of a prime minister, or at least possess a power adequate to it. He therefore took this occasion to represent to the Shah, that he was very ready to march against the enemy, and finish the business of restoring to his majesty all his dominions ; but that he knew an army was not to be kept together without pay ; and moreover, he had learnt from the experience of Lutf Ali Khan, towards the close of the unfortunate reign of his father, that the intrigues of a court often baffle the most glorious military operations ; therefore, if his majesty meant to compleat the work which was so happily begun, a power must be granted him to levy money for the payment of the army.

The king, who already designed to give his aunt in marriage to this general, and had actually made him Begler Beg of Khorasan, was startled at his demand of this extraordinary power of levying money; being sensible that such a step was in some measure to yield up the sovereignty. He consulted however with some of the principal officers, if there was any proper person to whom he could give the command of the army. Whether these officers were in the interest of the general or not, they declared their opinion, that the soldiers would not willingly serve under any other person than Tæhmas Kouli Khan; and consequently, that it would be best to comply with his demand for the present, and resent his insolence hereafter, when there should not be any such pressing occasion for his services. The Khan, thus obtaining his point in so important an article, professed an entire devotion to his master's service: as a proof of which, he offered to take the field immediately, and go in search of the Afghans. Accordingly before the end of December this year, the Persian army began their march towards Shiras.

P A R T . XI.

F R O M T H E

Total Defeat of the AFGHANS in
January 1730,

T I L L

TÆHMAS·KOULI KHAN is chosen KING
in March 1736.

C H A P . XLIV.

Ashreff stops at Shirafs. Tæhmas Kouli Khan marches and defeats the Afghans the 15th of January 1730. Flight, distress, and death of Ashreff. Tæhmas Kouli Khan marches against the Turks, and takes Hamadan and Tavis; he makes a truce, returns to Herat, reduces that province, and marches into Khorasan. The Shah marches to Erivan, obtains some advantages over the Turks, and is afterwards defeated near the Aras, and again at Hamadan.

A SHREFF did not entertain the least thoughts, that the active Tæhmas Kouli Khan would remain long at Isfahan; on the contrary, he expected to be closely pursued. He had, besides his army, a numerous caravan, of which part consisted in camels loaded with the plunder of Isfahan; yet the first day he marched sixty miles. His intentions were to have taken the rout of Kherman, but hearing that the Balouches were in arms, and concluding they would have no regard to him as a fugitive prince, possessed of great riches, he determined to march to Shirafs. When he was informed that the Persian army was loitering in Isfahan, he had leisure to plunder and ravage the province, as well as the city; and gave a loose to all that barbarity, which the complicated motives of revenge and avarice can suggest to a mind naturally

turally cruel. To this he was the more induced, by the conduct of the Persians in Isfahan towards the Afghans.

Tæhmas Kouli Khan having supported the rigour of the season with great constancy, after a march of twenty days arrived near Aftakhar *. His troops had suffered very much by the severity of the season, and want of provisions, the Afghans having laid the country waste ; so that the Persian general found his army considerably diminished, by mortality and desertion. The Afghans having fixed their camp in an advantageous situation, determined to try the fortune of another battle. The Persian troops, on their part, were impatient to give a finishing stroke to the Afghans.

The 15th of January, Tæhmas Kouli Khan attack- 1730.
ed the Afghans with all his troops, with the same vigour as he had done at Mourtchakor, and put them instantly to flight ; infomuch that he was apprehensive, lest by so feeble a resistance they meant only to draw him into an ambuscade. He had adopted it as a maxim, not to separate his troops ; being sensible that when a detachment is routed, their flight often throws a whole army into confusion ; and that the speed with which the vanquished fly, is but a precarious security to them, since the conqueror must overtake them at last.

An excess of caution, may bring on the same consequences as rashness : the Khan's great circumspection, upon this occasion, gave the Afghans an opportunity to concert measures for their secure retreat, with all their valuable effects. The houses, gardens, and narrow passages about the city of Shirafs, were such as rendered the approach difficult ; and the Khan resolved to put nothing to an unnecessary hazard, since it was plain that the pride of the Afghans was humbled to the dust.

These people had however taken a resolution, to defend a passage in the north side of the mountains, which leads to the city ; and dividing their men into platoons, made several discharges on the Persian army : finding this did not hinder the Persians from marching on in regular order, they fled to Shirafs. Ashreff being now reduced to the last extremity, sent two of his principal officers to Tæhmas Kouli Khan, with offers of delivering up the princesses, also the treasure and other effects belonging to the crown, on condition that he and his troops should retire out of Persia unmolested, and carry with them their families, arms, and baggage. To this the Khan replied, that he would not comply with such proposals ; on the contrary, that if they did

* This city is near the ruins of the antient Persepolis.

did not deliver up Ashreff, he would put all the Afghans to the sword. These officers then pretended, that if the Khan would grant them quarter, they would deliver up their chief; to this no definitive answer was given, but the deputies were permitted to retire.

In the interim Ashreff, who was not ignorant that he had nothing to expect but a cruel death, if he fell into the hands of the Persians, marched off in the night, and was got to some distance before the Khan was informed of it. It may be presumed, that it did not give him any great concern that he had missed the recovery of the princesses of the royal blood, however he might be affected with regard to the treasure. In order to facilitate their retreat, the Afghans separated into different bodies; it therefore became the more difficult to prevent their flight. The Khan was not perhaps so much concerned about this, as his army imagined; since every circumstance of his conduct proved that he was in his heart a Tartar, and more disposed to favour that nation than the natives of Persia; and thus we may, in some measure, reconcile a conduct seemingly so contrary to the natural activity of his genius. However, on his arrival at Shirafs, he caused several of the Afghans, whom he found there, to be put to death; those of any distinction he sent prisoners to Isfahan with the news of his victory.

Altho' Ashreff had made a sudden and secret flight, some of the parties, which the Khan detached after him, overtook the Afghans, and a skirmish ensued, but the Persians were obliged to retreat. It is not easy to figure the difficulties which Ashreff encountered; his riches serving only to increase his danger: besides the great distress he was in for provision and forage, in the dead of winter, he was perpetually attacked on every side by the peasants, till at length he was obliged to abandon his baggage, and after that to drop all the Persian women and children, whom he was carrying into captivity. Some of his followers, transported with rage and jealousy, killed their women, to prevent their falling into the hands of their enemies.

Under these circumstances, it was impossible for them to keep together in any considerable body: their division gave an opportunity to most of their captives to escape; and among these were the aunt and sister of Shah Tæhmas. As soon as these ladies returned to Shirafs, they were conducted honourably to the court at Isfahan, and the former was given to Tæhmas Kouli Khan in marriage. Hunger and thirst, cold and fatigue, with incessant skirmishes, having dispersed the
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the Afghans; Ashreff had with him only 200 men, when he was attacked by a body of the Balouches^w: he made a very gallant defence, but at length he and his people were cut to pieces.

Thus ended the usurpation of the Afghans, but not the calamities of Persia. The death of Ashreff was but a prelude to those mischiefs, which Nadir, that scourge of heaven, was to bring on this unhappy country. The weakness of Hussein's reign, had been the first apparent cause, which by a chain of effects could hardly fail to plunge this miserable nation into further misfortunes, not inferior to those it had felt under the cruel Afghans.

Tæhmas Kouli Khan remained about two months in Shiraz, and refreshed his army. As soon as the spring approached, he directed his course towards Hamadan: his name was already so formidable to the Turks, that from his valour and experience, they dreaded the loss of those dominions, which they had conquered during the late troubles in Persia. If he was an object of terror to them, his conduct also gave umbrage at the court of Isfahan; the ascendancy he had obtained by means of the army under his command, rendered him already too great for a subject.

Shah Tæhmas had no sooner made a disposition of his interior government, than he sent an ambassador to the port, to acquaint the grand signior of his re-establishment in the government of the Persian empire; and that he desired to live in perfect amity with the Turks; demanding, however, the restitution of his dominions, which they had taken during the troubles, and also all the Persian prisoners. The ambassador had hardly opened his commission, when news arrived at Constantinople, that the Persian army had already taken Hamadan. The Turkish ministry enraged at this proceeding, declined any further conference. The ambassador declared, that he believed the news was not true, or that those hostilities had been committed contrary to his master's intention, by some rebellious subjects: however, the Turks resolved immediately to declare war against the Persians, and accordingly made great preparations to carry it on with vigour.

In the mean while, Tæhmas Kouli Khan had by his arbitrary proceedings, and the abuse of his authority, rendered his

^w There are different accounts given concerning the place where this Afghan chief ended his life, but as the desert of Segestan was his rout to Kandahar, it may be presumed that he was not very far advanced in that country when this event happened.

his security absolutely inconsistent with peaceable measures ; or, indeed, with any other situation than that of being at the head of an army. He had, in fact, beaten Abdallah Basha, and taken Hamadan, and following the Turks to Kerman-shah, completed the defeat of that army. After putting garrisons in these places, he marched for Tavis and Ardeville†, which the Basha Kouproli was ordered to defend with 40,000 men ; however, the Khan having out-marched him, took these places. The Turks being thus terrified at the progress of the Persians, demanded a truce, to which Tæhmas Kouli Khan consented the more readily, as the Abdolles of Herat had revolted, and formed a considerable army. Upon this he returned back with a large body of his troops, and by a laborious march entered the country of Esferain, and defeated the Abdolles in a pitched battle. He then blockaded Herat, which being unprovided for a siege, was obliged to submit. He put the governor and all the principal persons concerned in the rebellion to death, and leaving a garrison of his own men, he marched to Mesched.

Tæhmas Shah concluded that the truce with the port would not terminate in any accommodation : the Turks took advantage of the absence of Kouli Khan, and great preparations were made for the march of the Ottoman armies. The Shah therefore left Isfahan in October, with an army of about 20,000 men, directing his course towards Tavis, where he joined the troops left by his general Tæhmas Kouli Khan. From thence he marched over the mountains of Armenia, in the height of winter, by which he lost a considerable number of his men : and about the 1731. end of February he reached Erivan. Ali Basha, Seraskier of that province, had taken care to supply the city, not only for a siege, but also to act offensively against the Persians when a favourable opportunity should offer : accordingly he caused 6000 of his men to march out of the garrison to attack the Persians, with instructions to retreat at the first fire. This order was executed so well, that the Persians having the appearance of a victory, followed the Turks, and fell into the snare ; for a masked battery of cannon was played on them so furiously, that they lost a great number of men. The Basha at the same time marched out of his camp, and attacked the Persians in flank, so that the battle became very bloody

† This city has been famous for the sepulchres of the Persian kings, for colleges richly endowed, and mosques with costly ornaments in silver ; but the Turks during the troubles alienated the lands, and plunder'd the riches.

bloody on both sides; however, the Persian valour was superior to that of the Turks, who were driven back to their entrenchments. The Shah then laid siege to the castle, but the Turks having laid the country waste, he soon found his army in distress for provisions, and was obliged to raise the siege. The Persian army then directed their course towards Tavis. Ali Basha followed them, and soon met and joined the forces of Basha Kouproli. The union of the Turkish troops having rendered them superior to the Persians, they attacked the Persian army near the city Aftabat, and defeated them, pushing some of the troops into the river Zengui^y; many of them were drowned, and a great number taken prisoners. Among the latter was Seffie Kouli Khan, a general of distinction, who had been formerly the Athemat Doulet of Shah Hussein. This person, now about 60 years of age, was remarkable for his knowledge and bravery. When he was brought prisoner to Constantinople, the grand signior demanded of him, why at the late siege of Tavis he had suffered the chief Mullah and his family to be massacred? He answered in an undaunted tone, "There are Rascals in Persia, as well as in Turkey, and when a place is taken by assault, it is impossible for commanders to prevent disorders." Whatever might be the reasons which induced the Ottoman court to behave thus cruelly to this gallant officer; he was conducted richly cloathed, with his hands tied behind him, to a place near the seraglio, where the grand signior glutted his resentment in seeing his head cut off. In the mean time, the Persian ambassadors had been very ill treated, and even plundered on the road, so that the Turks seemed to observe no terms with their enemies, but determined to lay waste the borders of Persia with fire and sword.

Tæhmas Shah had, before his defeat near Aftabat, resolved to abandon Tavis, in order to provide for the security of Hamadan, to which Achmed Basha was preparing to lay siege. The Persian army reached the plains of Hamadan in September, being reduced from 50² to less than 30,000 men. With these were joined the garrison of the city; and a bloody battle ensued between the two armies, in which the Turks^y were victorious. The Shah returned with his scattered forces to Casbin; and Hamadan fell again into the

^y This river falls into the Aras, a little below Aftabat.

² It may be presumed that he collected a great number of forces in his march through Persia into the Turkish dominions, besides the forces he found at Tavis.

the hands of the Turks. Thus the Ottoman army gained this year, what they lost the year before.

During these transactions in the field, the situation of affairs in Turkey was changed by intestine commotions. As they had moreover much to lose, without a prospect of making any further acquisition, peace was become very desirable. Achmed, Basha of Bagdat, in consequence of the success of the Persians in the preceding year, had received orders to make a peace with them on the best terms he could. Ibrahim Basha, the grand visier, was apprehensive that if success attended the arms of the Persians in reconquering the provinces wrested from that monarchy, during the invasion of the Afghans, such an event would necessarily render his safety the more precarious, as he was already odious to the people.

The end of September the preceding year, a great revolution happened at Constantinople; and as this event was attended with remarkable circumstances, it will not be foreign to our subject, to give a succinct account of it.

C H A P. XLV.

An account of the revolution in Turkey. The grand visier, and several other great officers put to death. Achmed III. dethroned. Mahommed advanced to the government. The extraordinary adventures of Patrona Kalil, chief of the rebels.

IT often pleases the wisdom of providence to accomplish the greatest ends by ignoble instruments. 1730. Patrona Kalil, a native of Albania, who had been a common sailor, and was now only a simple Janissary, became the instrument of dethroning Achmed III. the grand signior, in resentment of the evil administration of the government, and the rapacious avarice of Ibrahim Basha the grand visier.

Patrona appeared in arms the 28th of September, at the head of a few desperate fellows. It was agreed this small body should divide itself into three companies, and taking different routs they were to meet at Atmeidan^a, which was appointed their general rendezvous. This disposition being made, Patrona began his march, displaying a small standard; his companions, with sabres in their hands, cried out, that

^a A plain, just without the city.

all shopkeepers and mechanicks should shut up their shops, and every good mussulman should follow their ensigns to Atmeidan, where they would communicate the just cause of their appearing in arms against the present government. The two other companies having done the same, the whole city was in an alarm, and the shops were shut up. The Turks who did not join them, confined themselves to their houses. The grand signior, and his visier Ibrahim, were at their country palaces at Scutari; and the Reys Effendi ^b was also at one of his country houses on the canal which extends to the Black Sea. This minister, being given up to his natural indolence, treated the account which was sent of the tumult as a matter below his attention; so that there was no person of authority to quash this commotion in the city, except the Aga of the Janissaries, and the Kiaya ^c of the grand visier. The last, apprehensive of danger, retired; whilst the Aga put himself at the head of his guards, designing to disperse the Mob. He soon found that his very guards were corrupted; and instead of being disposed to act offensively against the promoters of the sedition, they began to complain of his not joining with them to obtain justice of the grand visier.

Things being thus circumstanced, he was intirely at a loss what measures to take, till news was brought him that a party of the rebels were gone to plunder his palace; upon which he retired to provide for his own security. The mob increased every moment: they obliged all the Turks they met to joyn them, threatening to kill those who refused; and some unhappy persons, who had no inclination to embark in so desperate an enterprize, actually fell a sacrifice to their fury. They now broke open all the prisons, and made slaves and malefactors the companions of their fortune. As their number augmented, those whom fear rather than inclination had hitherto restrained, became the partners of their rebellion. Thus the fire of sedition had already made a great progress, before the grand visier had received any exact information of it; so that it was not till four in the afternoon that the Musti ^d, the Kaimakhan ^e, and the Kiaya, with several other principal officers of state, came to inform him to what

Things

^b Secretary of state.

^c This is the great usher of the household, the visier as well as the grand signior has one.

^d The first ecclesiastic, or chief of the law.

^e The deputy of the grand visier, who acts as governor of Constantinople.

a height the insurrection was arrived. Immediately a council was held, which lasted till night without any resolution, but that they should hold another council at the palace of the grand signior. Here it was resolved that the court should immediately go to Constantinople: and they accordingly embarked in a yacht. They were no sooner arrived, than the grand visier, with the other ministers, began to deliberate what measures to take under such pressing circumstances, which were of such a nature, as seemed already to baffle the utmost of their skill and authority. They resolved however unanimously, that the only effectual method was the force of arms, and therefore a body of troops should be collected. This indeed seemed to be the only expedient; but the grand signior being informed of their resolution, was unwilling to try such desperate means. As soon as it was day, his highness sent one of the principal officers of the Bostangis^s to Atmeidan, to command the rebels in the grand signior's name to retire; and to acquaint them that if they did not shew a ready obedience, his highness would be obliged to have recourse to arms. They made reply with great unconcern, that they were assembled for the honour and welfare of the state, and would not lay down their arms, till the sultan redressed their grievances.

The grand signior highly incensed at so insolent an answer, gratified his resentment in reproaching his visier Ibrahim as the cause of the disorder. The visier laid the fault on the Kaimakhan, loading him with the most heavy reproaches in the presence of the sultan; turning towards whom he said, "Will your highness suffer that a wretch so vile and "despicable as this shall longer enjoy the light." The sultan struck with the manner in which his visier accused the Kaimakhan, caused him immediately to be arrested: and then assuming a composed air, discoursed with the visier upon the situation of their affairs. Ibrahim who was an able, tho' not an honest minister, found the advice his master gave was impracticable; therefore, without amusing him with vain projects, he recommended force as the only expedient to reduce the rebellion. "I see," continued he, "in this "crisis of the empire, only two expedients; either that your "highness put yourself at the head of your household troops, "and fall upon the rebels, or that you permit me to go in "your place. I flatter myself that I am sufficiently beloved

B b

"ed

^s These are a species of militia in Turkey, but they also serve as guards of the seraglio.

“ ed by the soldiers to form a considerable party, as
 “ soon as I shall appear.”

The timorous sultan relished neither of these proposals, but still vainly endeavoured to avail himself of the right he derived as sovereign of the people. He therefore caused the standard of Mahommed to be forthwith displayed at the gates of the seraglio, and ordered a proclamation to be made from the ramparts, that every foldier who would come under this banner, to assist him in reducing the rebels, should receive a gratification of 30 crowns ^b; and, moreover, that their pay should be augmented two aspers. He soon found that these fair promises was ineffectual, and therefore gave orders that the Bostangis should be assembled; but neither were these orders practicable, for those who were capable of bearing arms concealed themselves, having no inclination to fight in behalf of a ministry, which had been long odious to them. His next application was to the marine; but before any number of men could be collected, Patrona Kalil, at the head of a body of rebels, fell upon the arsenal, drove the captain Bashta from it, and threatened the soldiers of the marine, if they persisted in defending the court, he would grant them no quarter, but would burn their houses, together with all the ships and gallies belonging to the sultan. By this means, he dispersed a great number who had already received money for enlisting, and brought off others to join his party; at the same time, he augmented his forces with all the Turkish malefactors and slaves, who were in the gallies and baths.

At length the grand signior sent a deputation to the rebels, demanding what their intentions were; they answered, that they desired the Musti, the grand visier Ibrahim Bashta, the Kaimakhan, Mustapha Bashta, and Mahommed the Kiaya, might be delivered to them: with regard to his highness, they were satisfied with his reign, and wished him prosperity. Upon this answer, the sultan immediately caused the two last to be arrested, and sent to acquaint the rebels that they should be put to death; but that, in consideration of his compliance so far, they ought to be contented with the banishment of the Musti and Visier. The rebels consented to spare the Musti, but still persisted in their first demand in regard to the visier; insomuch, that the sultan found his own security would be endangered by his refusal.

In the mean while Patrona conducted himself with all the dignity and good order of a commander in chief, exacting an
 oath

^b I suppose dollars of 4 s.

oath from his companions, that they should commit no kind of excess. For the better support of their discipline, some, who had committed thefts and disorders, were actually punished with death by a consent of the leaders of the rebellion : by which means the city was supplied with provisions as usual. The Janissaries, who had revolted long before in their hearts, joined the rebels at Atmeidan, where they formed a regular camp. This step seemed to render the affairs of the court desperate ; however, the sultan made another effort to obtain the life of Ibrahim Bascha : to which the rebels made no other reply, than that they had already done enough in pardoning the Musti. The grand visier, and other great officers already mentioned, were accordingly condemned to die, and the 30th of September the delinquents were conducted to Kapu Orasi *. The approach of death so terrified the Kiaya, that he rendered up his soul without the hand of the executioner. The Kaimakhan performed the offices of devotion, and received the absolution which is usual on such important occasions, in a very composed and regular manner. The visier did not express less fortitude and composure, but he neither said his prayers, nor received absolution ; observing, that as his life was so near an end, he would not give himself that trouble.

How far the grand visier had misbehaved, during the long administration of twelve years, may be judged from the immense riches which he left behind him. One of the gentlemen of his bed-chamber ¹, who had been in his secrets, now confessed that in a vault under the pigeon-house, which this minister had caused to be built in one of the courts of the seraglio, his riches were deposited. From hence were taken four iron chests, of which three contained 18 long leather bags, with 60,000 sequins ^m funduklis in each, and the fourth contained a great quantity of precious stones. The Kiaya of Ibrahim's harram, who had a perfect knowledge of his affairs, confessed that a great part of these riches was the price of injustice ; and that he had himself been employed in the most secret manner, at different times, in conveying money into these chests.

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* The apartment in the seraglio, where prisoners of state are put death.

¹ Anahtar Oglar.

^m At 9s. 4d. the sequin is 1,512,000*l.* which seems to be much too large a sum to be amassed by any minister in any country.

The next day in the morning, the bodies of these three great officers, without any funeral rites, and almost naked, were conveyed in a cart to Atmeidan, followed by a crowd, who expressed great contempt and resentment of the conduct of these ministers by insulting their remains, and declaring with loud acclamations, that they hoped all the enemies of their religion and country would meet with the same fate. When the bodies were brought into the camp; the rebels ~~were~~ loud in their expressions of resentment, that the grand signior had not delivered the traitors alive, as he had promised. It was urged, on the other hand, that the sultans had never been accustomed to deliver their ministers alive into the hands of their enemies; and that they ought to be satisfied with the great condescension which his highness had shewn upon this occasion.

The rebels having carried their point thus far, were intoxicated with their own success; and began to declare without reserve, that they would depose the Sultan Achmed III. and set his nephew Mahommed on the throne. They considered that Achmed was naturally cruel, and had caused all those to be put to death who had dethroned his brother Mustapha II. in 1703; and consequently, they could expect very little quarter from him, should his power be again established, as they had been the authors of the death of his near relation Ibrahim: on the contrary, should they chuse Mahommed who had been confined for seven and twenty years, there was great reason to believe he would acknowledge their services. Achmed, in reality, had given them no remarkable cause of complaint, except his great favour to Ibrahim Basha; so that it was in some measure difficult to find a specious motive for this last act of violence on the state. They pretended, that the body of the visier Ibrahim was not among those of the delinquents; however, after hanging the bodies of the Kaimakhan and Kiaya; each upon a tree, as spectacles to the people, they dragged the third, which was really Ibrahim's, at a horse's tale to the gates of the seraglio.

Here they demanded with the most clamorous insolence, that the real visier with all his creatures should be delivered to them alive, as also the Reys Effendi; adding, that as they could not depend on the promises of Achmed, who contrary to all laws, persisted in protecting a villain, whose avarice had plunged the state into the greatest distress, he was no longer worthy to reign: at the same time they proclaimed Mahommed. Achmed tried every expedient to quiet them, offering them considerable rewards, and to deliver up all those

those whom they demanded; but they were inflexibly bent on dethroning him. On their return to Atmeidan, they threw the carcass of Ibrahim into the common road, near a fountain, where this minister had erected an elegant structure about two years before, as an embellishment to the city, and for the use of the people.

The rebels having plunged themselves so deep, began to find the necessity of some person, skilled and experienced in politicks, to conduct them in the completion of their work. Ispiri Zade, one of the sultan's chaplains, though he had often received the highest marks of the royal bounty, had the ingratitude to abandon his master, and join in the conspiracy. This man had concealed his ambition under the cloak of piety and mortification, and was now secretly become their chief adviser. The 1st of October he entered the seraglio, where he found the ministers of Achmed under a great consternation, not knowing what would be the issue of the rebellion. As soon as this treacherous priest entered the apartment, the ministers inquired impatiently what was passing in the city. He answered with the air of a man depressed with sorrow: "The rebels will not upon any account submit that Achmed shall reign over them any longer; all my endeavours in favour of the sultan are rendered abortive, by the fierceness of their animosity. It is in vain to flatter ourselves any longer, that we shall be able to alter their resolution."

At these words, the whole assembly became motionless, and unable to utter a word. The perfidious Ispiri Zade, observing that there was no body who dared to acquaint the sultan with this news, went himself. As soon as he entered the royal presence, Achmed said, "Are the rebels yet at Atmeidan? why do they not retire? I have shewn them more favour than I ought: I have offered to do them justice on those of whom they complain; and I have promised them large presents; what would they have more?" Ispiri Zade replied, in a bold but composed tone, "Thy reign is finished; thy revolted subjects will no longer submit to thy dominion." Achmed, starting up, replied, "Whence comes it that you have delayed to give me this information?" Then running immediately to the apartment of Mahommed his nephew, he took him by the hand, and conducting him to the throne, placed him there himself, and was the first that saluted him as emperor. Among many tender things, he spoke to this effect: "Remember

“ member that your father lost the place in which you are
 “ now seated, by his blind complaisance for his musti Fei-
 “ zoullah Effendi; and that I lose it myself, by having
 “ trusted too much to my visier Ibrahim Bascha. Learn from
 “ our examples not to confide in your ministers without due
 “ circumspection. If I had always followed my old max-
 “ ims, I should never have left mine so long in place, or
 “ omitted to have demanded frequent and regular accounts
 “ of the affairs of the empire. Perhaps I might have then
 “ finished my reign as gloriously as I began it. Farewell;
 “ I wish that yours may be more happy; and I hope that
 “ you will have a proper regard for me and my children,
 “ whom I recommend to your care.” Immediately the
 unfortunate Achmed retired to those appartments which his
 nephew had just quitted.

After the ceremony of the inauguration of the new
 sultan was performed with the usual pomp, and he had re-
 ceived the honours due to this high dignity; his curiosity
 excited him to see Patrona Kalil, who had been the instru-
 ment of his exaltation to the throne. This man appeared
 before the grand signior in the habit of a common Janissary,
 with his naked knees. He advanced with a bold air to the
 sultan's throne, and kissed his hand. His highness said,
 “ What can I do for thee? Thou hast a right to demand
 “ of me any favour.” This artful wicked fellow, now
 gave marks of more noble and generous sentiments, than
 could be expected from his birth and past life, and answered
 the sultan to this purpose: “ As to the present time, I am
 “ arrived at the highest point of my wishes, in seeing your
 “ highness on the throne of the Ottoman empire. With re-
 “ gard to the future, I know I have nothing to expect from
 “ you but an ignominious death.” The grand signior re-
 plied, “ I swear I will never do you any harm; tell me
 “ only what recompence I can make you, and I grant
 “ it before you ask.” “ Since your royal goodness is with-
 “ out bounds,” replied Patrona, “ I desire that you will
 “ suppress all the new imposts with which your Subjects
 “ have been loaded under the late administration.”

This was a dangerous request, as it seemed to increase the
 popularity of this fellow; however the grand signior did not
 hesitate to comply, and orders were immediately given to
 suspend the collection of those taxes. In the interim the re-
 bels, far from disbanding, committed many outrages, par-
 ticularly in pillaging several houses of persons proscribed,
 which had been sealed up with the royal seal. The new sul-
 tan

tan could not but have a quick resentment of so great a mark of disrespect, as well as violation of the laws; however, as he was not yet secure on his throne, he desired that they would refrain from such kind of executions; representing at the same time, that as they had placed him on the throne, they ought to leave the power and authority of punishing to him in the manner which he should think most convenient. These gentle remonstrances, though founded in the highest reason, did not prevail on the base and undisciplined minds of the rebels; on the contrary, they renewed their instances that the Reys Effendi should be delivered up to them. Tho' this minister had not been so guilty as the other officers of state, yet he thought proper to retire and conceal himself. But had he been present, the new sultan seemed in no disposition to comply with their extravagance, the gratification of which might have only served to increase their tumultuous fury.

The rebels proceeded in rifling the houses of those who were most obnoxious to them: the plunder of the grandees, together with the riches of the visier, enabled Patrona to make a plentiful distribution of money to gratify all his followers, among whom even children and old men were admitted, as by this means he increased his popularity. The lieutenant-general of the Janissaries, tho' chosen by the rebels, was confirmed by the sultan; he therefore took the liberty to represent, that so profuse a liberality to persons so little intitled to it, ill suited with just government, in the cause of which they had taken up arms: but this unhappy officer, for his indiscreet zeal, was cut to pieces on the spot.

The grand signior, observing that it would be impossible to establish peace whilst Patrona appeared in arms, proposed to give him a rich government, or a sum of money to retire. Patrona knew well that he could have no security but in arms; however he continued to chastise those who committed any outrage without his permission. All the new officers of state, out of fear of his lawless power, paid him the greatest respect.

Patrona at length reflecting, that the character of a disinterested patriot, in which he had hitherto appeared, would not support him, when the lives of the inhabitants of Constantinople, together with their wealth should cease to be in his power; began to accept bribes, and to sell his favours for money. His companions being informed of it, expressed their resentment with some bitterness, as he thus violated those principles, in defence of which they had taken up arms. The matter was but too apparent, and tended much to weaken
his

his interest ; however, he still pretended that all his passions and desires centered in the public good.

Their plundering and proscriptions still continuing, the sultan convoked a council, composed of his new musti and principal officers of state. In consequence of this, the musti prepared his religious artillery, by sending his Fetfa to the rebel camp at Atmeidan, by the Istamboul Effendi°. This was a humorous whimsical fellow, who having from the beginning taken the part of the rebels, was in great esteem amongst them, and played his part so well, that the most sensible among the Janissaries consented to retire to their quarters, and to submit to the sultan's pleasure. At the same time the rebels were threatned, that if they did not retire, the standard of Mahommed would not be hung out in vain, seeing that there were thousands in Constantinople ready to shed their blood in defence of it. Upon this they submitted, on condition that none of them should be put to death, and that they should have three standards displayed, by which means they might unite in their own defence in case of need. Extraordinary as this proposal may appear, the court thought proper to submit to it, for the present, for fear of worse consequences.

The blaze of this rebellious fire seemed thus to be extinguished. The court thought it unsafe to proceed to the execution of any of the chiefs, though it could hardly be expected that the Janissaries, after so licentious a life for fourteen days, would submit to the proper discipline of that body, in whose chambers it is not permitted to drink wine, nor commit any sort of debauch. During their seditious practices, Patrona Kalil had possessed himself of money sufficient to maintain him in a genteel manner ; but his greatest distinction in his own esteem, was derived from being the chief author of the revolution.

He now took a house contiguous to the chambers of the Janissaries, and 400 of his followers well armed continued about his person. They spent their time in debauches, and several murders were committed in broad day. Grown hardy in their imaginary security, they made no scruple to visit the new grand visier, as if they considered him as their creature. They demanded the banishment of several persons of distinction ; that others should have their employments taken from them ; and they named, at the same time, those whom they would have preferred. Among the latter, Patrona carried his insolence so far, as to demand that a cer-
tain

° Lieutenant of the police in Constantinople.

tain Greek butcher called Yanaki, to whom he had been much obliged for trusting him with a great quantity of provisions, should be made prince of Moldavia. The ceremonies of the investiture of this butcher prince were actually performed; but as he was not able to raise the funds necessary on this occasion, and his friend Patrona, conscious of the wild absurdity of his conduct, had deserted him; the imaginary principality of the vain Greek was changed into a Prison.

This, and other such extravagancies, began to make the Janissaries ashamed of espousing the cause of so despicable a wretch. Patrona's pride was then a little humbled; he therefore went to pay his court to the Kadileskier ^P, a man of singular probity. He received him with great coldness; however, Patrona with an air of dignity, addressed him as follows: "You know, great Effendi ^Q, that God has been
 " pleased to make use of this feeble arm, to deliver his people from the oppression of the late ministry. You, who are
 " wise, and can see into the hearts of men, know that my
 " designs are good; however, I find that some ill-intentioned persons misinterpret my actions, and endeavour to represent them as criminal to our master the sultan; for
 " whom I have so often exposed my life. If these calumnies
 " continue, I beg you will be my advocate with his highness." The Kadileskier answered, "That he held falsehood in the highest contempt, and should never be ashamed to tell the truth, and that he might be assured if his opinion was asked, he should declare what he thought." Patrona was willing to interpret this ambiguous answer in his own favour, and kissing the hand of the Kadileskier, he retired, and gave a handful of sequins to his domestics; which the Kadileskier ordered to be thrown into the sea before Patrona's face, as a mark of his contempt and indignation.

Patrona was yet at the head of a party sufficient to screen him from the resentment of the court, which now meditated a fair occasion to cut him off. The 6th of November, as deputy of the janissaries, he convoked a grand council, at which the Khan of the Crim Tartars, the grand visier, the musti, and other great officers of state were present. He opened the assembly himself, and addressing himself to the Khan, spoke to this effect: "The present situation of the
 " empire has occasioned the convocation of this council; I
 " know that our affairs in Persia are every day falling to de-
 " cay.

^P Chief justice.

^Q The name common to those versed in the law.

“ say. The Russians are continually sending succours to the
 “ Persians; therefore my opinion is, that we ought to de-
 “ clare war, to prevent greater evils, and to revenge our-
 “ selves on them for the blood of mussulmen, which they
 “ have been the cause of spilling. Let us immediately send
 “ a great army against them, whilst the Tartars invade the
 “ country of these infidels on the other side, and bring the
 “ inhabitants into slavery. I think also that there is an ab-
 “ solute necessity to curb the bashas on the frontiers,
 “ in their evil practices; so far from taking care of the
 “ troops, and regarding the Janissaries as the sure support of
 “ this monarchy, they treat them ill, and retain their pay
 “ for their private use, and to gratify their own creatures.”

He made several other remarks in as wild and indigested a manner, whilst the whole assembly, with hearts full of indignation, deplored the wretched situation of the state, that obliged the great council of the Ottoman empire to hear this despicable wretch presume to give laws. At length the Khan of the Tartars, tired of hearing his impertinent discourse, said, “ You, who speak so much of war, do you
 “ know what it is? What reasons are there that his high-
 “ ness should declare war against the Russians? Do you not
 “ know that the court is at peace with them; and that
 “ without just cause we ought not to break that peace?
 “ Before we proceed to such extremities, we ought to
 “ know the truth of the extraordinary reports which you
 “ make. After this, upon mature deliberation, we might
 “ resolve whether peace or war is most for the honour and
 “ advantage of the empire. These are not such light mat-
 “ ters as you seem to imagine: tell me by what rout you
 “ would penetrate into Russia?” “ By what rout,” replied Patrona, “ that is a pleasant question indeed; why
 “ can’t we go the same way as we did before, you on one
 “ side, and we on the other?” The Tartar Prince, with an air that plainly shewed he thought it below his dignity to make any answer, otherwise than as the circumstances of the state rendered it necessary to temporize, spoke to this effect: “ Formerly we passed through Poland, because we
 “ were then at war with the Polanders, but at present we are
 “ at peace with them. Is it just to spread desolation among
 “ people, against whom we have no cause of complaint?
 “ Do you know that an army of an hundred thousand Tar-
 “ tars, cannot march into a country without ruining it? It
 “ is true that war is the proper occupation, and the real
 “ source of the riches of my subjects: shut up in the plains
 “ of

“ of the Crim, as we have no trade, we decline into poverty ; but, we had rather sacrifice our particular interest, than justice, equity, and the laws of nations. We know that wars are the chastisements of heaven ; and we ought to reflect maturely before we take up arms, that we may not repent when we are obliged to lay them down again. These are not affairs to be resolved on in a hurry.” Patrona replied, “ I see no harm in carrying desolation into the country of infidels ; and as to our deliberations, I did not expect this council should have been composed of more than you, Moussouk Aga^r, the grand visier, a few other persons, and myself ; and for the future, if you please, it shall be so, that we may conduct our business with more secrecy ; otherwise the infidels, being informed of our resolutions, will disconcert our measures.” “ When the business of a council,” replied the Khan, “ is to consult of war or peace, it is a maxim established among us, to have numerous assemblies, that we may know the different sentiments of men upon so weighty a concern. You see that Ibrahim Basha, ambitious of governing alone, not only perished himself by an ignominious death, but was near drawing on the ruin of the empire. It is astonishing, that so recent and terrible an example does not instruct you to avoid the danger of directing solely ; but I declare, if that continues, I will supplicate his highness to send me into the remotest banishment, rather than be a witness to the violation of his honour, and the ruin of the state.”

So bold a declaration as this, could not but silence the formidable Patrona. The council broke up, and nothing was determined. Many entertained the most ardent wishes to see the destruction of the rebels ; who, on their part, concerted measures to put their own creatures in possession of the principal offices of the government, as the only means of securing themselves.

Two

^r This was another Janissary of the same stamp as Patrona himself, who had forfeited his life on several occasions. This fellow, during the transactions of the late revolution, went with an imperious air into some of the tribunals in Constantinople, and without reserve dispatched his emissaries who attended him, with orders to kill such and such persons ; letting those who were present know at the same time who he was, and that he had the gift of discovering the hearts of men ; that he loved honest men, and hated rascals ; bidding them look to themselves. Such was the power of the Janissaries at that time, and the terror which they spread through the city.

Two days afterwards, the grand signior invited Patrona, Moussouk, and the Aga of the Janissaries, to court, desiring to be informed of the effect of their conference, and to consult with them what measures to pursue in regard to the affairs of Persia, as well as the interior government of the empire. At 11 o'clock they attended, with a retinue of six and twenty persons, whom they left in the first court, and were themselves conducted to the chamber, where the Ottoman princes are circumcised^c. Here they found the Khan of the Tartars, the musti, the grand visier, with other great officers of the crown, seated according to their rank: there were also many officers of the Bostangis, and other persons, standing. The rebels took their seats, without seeming to suspect any danger, as the Bostangis are considered as domestics of the seraglio.

The grand visier opened the assembly, and addressing himself to Patrona, said, "The grand signior has made you Beglerbeg of Romania^d, and gives you the command of 30,000 men, with which you are to join Achmed, Basha of Bagdat, and to act in concert with him against the Persians." He next spoke to Moussouk Aga in these terms: "His highness has appointed you Beglerbeg of Natolia, with a body of troops under your command." And then turning to the Aga of the Janissaries, he acquainted him, "That he was appointed Basha of the three tails." Thus he was going on, when Mustapha Aga^e cried out aloud, "Let all the enemies of the state be extirpated;" and immediately thirty of the officers of the Bostangis fell with their sabres upon Patrona Kalil, Moussouk, and the Aga of the Janissaries. The first was drawing his dagger from under his furr to defend himself, when Mustapha Aga cut his arm with a stroke of his sabre: Moussouk threw his robe over his face, and resigned himself to his destiny like a Cæsar.

It may appear extraordinary, that these traitors left their guard in the outward court; however, the difficulty is reconciled,

^c They call this the Sunnet Odassi.

^d The antient Thrace. This is one of the richest governments in the neighbourhood of Constantinople; it is a fruitful country, bounded on the south by the Archipelago, near 300 miles long, and more than half as broad, covered with high mountains, which are natural bulwarks against an enemy.

^e This person had in his youthful age been a creature of the Khan of the Tartars, and was a captain of the 17th company of the Janissaries when the sedition broke out; but being devoted to his old master, he now took the side of the court, and behaved with the most approved fidelity.

conciled, when we consider that the business they were to treat of, was of an important nature, and that they had, in the fond presumption of their imaginations, flattered themselves into a belief that the grand signior had adopted their sentiments; not only with regard to the affairs of the empire, but also in respect to the secret manner in which they proposed to hold their councils, agreeably to what Patrona had recommended in the last assembly.

As soon as these rebel chiefs were put to death, their bodies were thrown into the court before the apartment where the catastrophe happened. A messenger was immediately sent to acquaint their guard, that as the grand signior had been pleased to present their chiefs with a coat of honour, his highness intended also to give them each a *Câstan* ^w; and for this purpose they were to enter three or four at a time, that the ceremony might be performed with decency. These deluded wretches were no sooner arrived in the interior part of the second court, than they underwent the same fate as their masters: some of them in the outer court at length began to suspect, as none of their companions returned, that they were ensnared, and attempted to save themselves: but the gates were shut upon them, and they were slaughtered in the same manner as the others.

The report now prevailed in the city, that Patrona, Mouflouk, and the Aga of the Janissaries, had been a long time in the seraglio, all the gates of which were shut. This brought several of the party thither, who began to murmur, and threaten violence; but as soon as they saw the gates opened, and several carts brought forth loaded with the bodies of their chiefs reeking with blood; they were seized with dismay and fled. All these mangled carcases were exposed in the street for two hours; after which, the court, apprehensive that so hideous a spectacle might conjure up some new frenzy among the people, caused them to be thrown into the sea.

A numerous body of guards were now ordered to patrol the streets, to keep good order, and prevent any desperate attempt to fire the city; for Patrona had often declared, that this would be the consequence of taking away his life. At the same time, several of the rebels were seized and put to death; and the butcher Yanika survived his patron but one day. Public thanks were then ordered to be given to the Almighty, for his singular mercy in delivering the state from
such

^w This is the term for those vestments which are presented as marks of favour.

such imminent danger. A general pardon was published to all the rebels, except certain persons who were deemed the chief conductors of the confederacy ; but their punishment also was changed into banishment. Besides these acts of clemency, large donatives were presented to the Janissaries, Spahis^{*}, and other orders of the soldiery who had been concerned in the revolt. Such marks of a generous disposition in their sovereign, converted their resentment into wishes for his prosperity and happiness ; so that by the end of November, the city was, to all appearance, restored to its former tranquillity.

The flames of sedition were not however extinguished. 1731. The blood of Patrona Kalil, Moussouk, and their other companions, like that of the Hydra, nourished new monsters, which in less than four months grew to a formidable size. The great dissipation of treasure which this revolution had caused, together with the want of conduct in the new ministers, not only occasioned the Janissaries to be in arrears for their pay, but also created a scarcity of provisions in Constantinople. Towards the end of February this year, people began to murmur aloud, and predict another revolution.

The number of loose and abandoned fellows, whom the late rebellion had brought together, was great. These from their natural disposition, and from their idle manner of living, were ripe for any desperate enterprize. The partizans of Achmed, the dethroned sultan, submitted with reluctance to the destiny of their late master ; so that the spirit of rebellion was secretly fomented. The court seemed, however, to have no suspicion of it, when news was brought the 25th of March, that a body of people had assembled at Atmeidan, the ordinary rendezvous of male-contents, who, after pillaging several shops, had collected a number of arms. These being joined by a party of the Janissaries, broke open and plundered the house of the Aga of the Janissaries, who with difficulty escaped with his life.

The Aga immediately acquainted the grand signior ; and his highness ordered the grand visier, the musti, and other great officers to be assembled. The experience of September last had taught them, that such lawless force can hardly be suppressed but by military justice : accordingly they instantly collected what forces were at hand, during the night ; and lest necessity should oblige them to call for assistance, they carried out the standard of Mahommed. The Turks
imagine

^{*} These are cavalry of the Asiatic dominions of Turkey.

imagine that those who die in defence of this standard, are entitled to the crown of martyrdom. As soon as day broke, the Aga of the Janissaries at the head of one party, and the grand visier with another, fell on the rebels at Atmeidan. A smart skirmish ensued : the standard-bearer was dismounted, and in danger of losing his standard, which might have had fatal consequences.

The rebels being at length put to flight, retired to the chambers of the Janissaries, who, though they had not taken arms in any considerable numbers, were ripe for rebellion. The grand visier therefore prudently declined following the rebels, lest the violation of that asylum, which the quarters of these soldiers are esteemed, should furnish a reason for a revolt, and plunge the city into the same disorder, as it had been exposed to four months before. They contented themselves with killing about 200 in the flight, and taking 60 prisoners. As soon as these last had made confession of their accomplices, they were strangled, and their bodies thrown into the sea.

The coffee-houses and taverns were immediately ordered to be shut ; and the Greeks who sell wine had their vessels staved, that no fuel might be afforded to heat the brains of a desperate mob. A constant patrol was kept in the streets, and the least suspicion rendered the party criminal, so that numbers of innocent persons suffered death. This severe method of curing so dangerous a disorder in the body politic had its effect, and prevented the flames of rebellion from spreading.

There were several parties of the rebels dispersed in different quarters of the city. Some thousands were determined to have joined the camp at Atmeidan : had the grand visier therefore been in any degree less active, it is probable another revolution would have succeeded, with circumstances more bloody and fatal than the former. It was imagined that Fatima, daughter of Achmed the III, and widow of the late grand visier Ibrahim Basha, who was strangled, had corrupted the Janissaries, in hopes of revenging the death of her husband. Whether this lady was guilty or not, is a question which has remained unresolved. In order to quash this spirit of sedition as much as possible, a considerable number of Bosnians, Albanians, and Lats^y, were banished out of the city. The grand visier also omitted no means of humbling the rebels. All those who were strangled or beheaded, were
thrown

^y These are a people who inhabit the coast of the Black Sea, who are robbers and murderers by profession.

thrown into the sea ; and floating about with the waves as spectacles of terror, became a prey to birds, and fish, inso-much that people of any delicacy, would not eat fish for some time.

It was reckoned, that in these different rebellions more than 10,000 men perished by the sword or the bow-string. Above 30,000 were driven out of Constantinople ; and the Jannissaries were quartered in different parts to prevent their cabals. Those of a seditious spirit were obliged to leave the city ; so that the public tranquillity was at length in a great measure restored. The Turks however suffered very great inconveniencies from these disorders, not only by unhinging their government, and giving occasion to a continual change of ministers ; but also by the dissipation of their treasure, which rendered them less capable of supporting a war against the Persians.

C H A P. XLVI.

Achmed, Basha of Bagdat, *negotiates a peace with the Persians in January 1732. Tæhmas Kouli Khan augments his army in Khorasan. He disapproves of the peace with the Turks, and enters into intrigues with his officers. He makes his son governor of Khorasan ; arrives at Isfahan in August 1732, and endeavours to vindicate his conduct to the Shah.*

DURING these intestine commotions in Constantinople, Achmed, Basha of Bagdat, received full orders to treat with the Persians for a peace, from an apprehension that a defeat of any of their armies in Asia would unavoidably bring on further revolutions. The loss which Tæhmas Shah lately sustained, in a great measure facilitated this undertaking. This prince had also many private reasons, with regard to his interior government, which rendered peace as desirable to him as it was to the Turks. Achmed Basha was too able a minister, to be ignorant of any material circumstance relating to Persia, the interest and power of which he perfectly understood ; and particularly, that the return of Tæhmas Kouli Khan might render the success of another campaign very different from the last. The grand signior had trusted him without reserve, to make the best terms he could. He therefore sent to the Persian king to acquaint him, that notwithstanding the great success of the Ottoman

Ottoman arms, his master the grand signior was ready to establish a firm and lasting friendship with him.

The Shah, who was at Casbin, received the news with the more satisfaction, as he was under some apprehensions, that if the Turks had resolved to march to Isfahan, that city must have fallen a prey to them; for there was no army between Hamadan and his metropolis, which could make head against them. The alarm in that city was so great, that when a detachment of the Persian troops arrived there to maintain tranquillity and order, numbers of the inhabitants were preparing for flight.

Achmed Bascha being apprehensive that his court might rise in her demands, in consequence of the late victory, was desirous to bring on an accommodation with the Persians as soon as possible. Experience, and the light of his own genius had instructed him, that a war with Persia could hardly be attended with any good consequences to his country; and that it must certainly hurt his own particular interest; Bagdad, the capital of his province, having long been an object on which the Persian kings had cast their eyes with earnest wishes.

Towards the close of the last year, the plenipotentiaries on the part of the Persians arrived at the Turkish camp near Hamadan. The conferences being opened the 16th of January following, the preliminary articles were signed. The river Aras was appointed as the boundary of the Persian dominions; so that the Shah yielded his right to Armenia, Erivan, and Georgia. The Turks thus remained possessed of a country near two hundred leagues in extent, which formerly belonged to Persia. It was however stipulated, that their joint forces should be united in case of need, to compel the Russians to evacuate Ghilan, Shirvan, and Derbend, with the rest of the western coast of the Caspian sea.

During these transactions, Tæhmas Kouli Khan, being possessed of the royal authority to raise money, established already a kind of independency; for the support of which he engaged in his service a considerable number of Abdollees, Afghans, Ousbegs, and Turkumans. If we may judge from consequences, and the general tenor of his conduct, he foresaw from the beginning, that the only method by which he could awe the Persians, and arrive at the object in view, would be to form a large army, composed chiefly of Tartars. For these not having any prejudices concerning the hereditary right of princes, were most likely to be at his devotion;

so long as he paid them well, which the power he was invested with, enabled him to do. He employed his time in Khorasan in putting Mesched in a situation of defence, and took other measures to prevent the incursions of the Tartars.

As soon as he heard that the Shah had lost two battles against the Turks, and was entering into pacific measures with them, he wrote immediately to his majesty in the strongest terms, desiring that he would persist in demanding the restitution of all the conquered provinces; adding, that he should join him soon with an army of victorious troops, before whom the Turks would fly, as the Afghans had lately done; that in the mean while, he need only keep on the defensive.

The Shah, who in a great measure inherited the peaceable disposition of his father, found more joy in repose than in conquest. It is probable, however, that he was actuated by motives of policy; for having now no enemy to contend with, his numerous standing army would become unnecessary; and he might have a fair opportunity of reducing the enormous power of his general, by either totally disbanding his forces, or reducing them to a small number. To this might be added, that Persia having groaned several years under the servitude of the Afghans, the people were very much impoverished, and required some respite to cultivate the earth, and rebuild their ruined houses.

After the conclusion of the peace, Tæhmas marched with his forces from Casbin to Isfahan; where he ratified the treaty, disbanded some of his troops, and sent others into their respective quarters. He then wrote to his general Tæhmas Kouli Khan, acquainting him, that he had thought proper to put an end to a war so chargeable to his people; and as he had no enemies foreign or domestic, that disturbed the repose of the state, he ordered him to disband the army under his command, and to repair to Isfahan, to consult with him concerning the domestic oeconomy of the government, and the welfare of his people.

These pacific measures were by no means consistent with the ambitious projects of the Persian general. He, who in a lower rank of life had been accustomed to follow the dictates of his own passions, unrestrained by any law human or divine, could hardly be expected to shew a passive conduct at the head of a victorious army, intirely devoted to his service. He had already acquainted his chief officers of the king's ill fortune against the Turks, and the peace which had been made in consequence of it: he represented this conduct as inglorious, impolitic and pusillanimous; and as that which
would

would draw on the misfortunes of the preceding reign, and plunge the empire into the same distress as it had been in under the Afghans. He further made them sensible, how much superior their valour and knowledge in the art of war was to that of the Turks; but that pacific measures, after thus rousing themselves to a martial spirit, were the sure way to enervate their minds, and disqualify them for the duties of a soldier; and consequently prepare them to become slaves again: that the Turks, in the mean while, being suffered to possess so fine and extensive a tract of country, would increase in power, and Persia would be exposed to the greater ruin hereafter: moreover, that such measures must certainly have a more direct aim at himself and them, whose military virtues rendered them objects of jealousy at court; and the experience of Hussein's reign had proved it to be dangerous for Persians to distinguish themselves in the service of their country.

Discourses like these carried with them the appearance of honour and integrity; and many who meant well to the royal family, had their loyalty shaken under the specious pretence of the public good. But not to throw all the odium on the king, Nadir artfully insinuated to these, that the ministers, whom their sovereign had employed to negotiate this peace, had been false to their trust; or Persia, supported by their victorious arms, would certainly have obtained terms less dishonourable. As to the common soldiers, what offended them most, was the consideration that no particular gratuity was promised them on their dismissal, after their great and signal services.

Under these circumstances, a man of less art and resolution than Nadir, might have tainted their minds with rebellious sentiments; however, it was necessary to conduct his designs to an issue with great circumspection, since there could not be wanting numbers in his army, who were much more inclined to displace their general than their king. Things were not yet arrived to maturity; nor could any certain judgment be formed of the state of affairs at so great a distance. The court was diffident of the general, and the general jealous of the court, so that neither knew exactly what the other intended.

Nadir was not at a loss to find pretences for delaying his return to court, and some time was necessary to plan his scheme for the increase of his power. It is hard to say, if the strong impulse of self-preservation had not almost as great a share as ambition. The easy credulous nature of

Tæhmas might have forgiven all that was past, with regard to the insolence of his general, in demanding so extraordinary a power as that of raising money, and his imperious conduct in the use of it. But several of the great men about the king's person, some from a knowledge of Nadir's boundless ambition, and others from private resentment, were so desirous of seeing him humbled, that they could not keep their own council. They discovered their opinion and designs to those, who were secretly in the interest of the general. Of all these intrigues and private commotions, the general was made acquainted; also of the conduct of some, who spoke disrespectfully of the king himself. He was therefore the better qualified how to act his part, when he should return to court.

He had employed the end of the last year, and the beginning of this, chiefly in levying men, and disciplining his army; which now amounted to near 70,000 men, the greatest part of them Tartars. The particular regard he had for the province of Khorasan, engaged his attention in every instance that could promote the welfare and security of it; and as a natural effect of his power, as well as to strengthen his interest in that country, he gave the government of the province to his son Riza Kouli. And tho' this step was presumed to be with the king's approbation, yet as this province had generally been given to one of the royal blood, his conduct in this instance seemed to demonstrate a despotic authority.

Having made this disposition, he set out about the month of June, making slow marches towards Isfahan, where he arrived in August. The people, as well as the king and his court, seemed to dread his approach. All persons of discernment saw that he could mount no higher, without seizing the diadem. The king himself hardly dared to name any persons to fill up the first employments of the empire, without the consent of his general. Tæhmas Kouli Khan ever took occasion to represent the necessity of supporting a great army, and that the national revenues ought to be appropriated to that purpose, prior to any of those large salaries, which he pretended were unnecessarily annexed to the great offices of the crown. Indeed he was the spirit that animated the whole army; he entered so intirely into the business of it, that hardly the meanest common soldier committed any offence, deserted, or died, but he was immediately acquainted; and the great strength of his memory enabled him to act in every circumstance of the military œconomy.

Tæhmas

Tæhmas Kouli Khan was now to shew a master-piece of policy. Directed by those principles which had been instrumental to his advancement to his present height of power, he was if possible to make the Shah subscribe to his own ruin. As soon as he arrived near Isfahan, and encamped his army, he waited on the king to inform him in what manner he had been employed, and how much he had his majesty's interest at heart. He represented at the same time, that his majesty had been very ill advised with regard to the peace he had lately concluded with the Turks, since he was morally certain, that the army under his command, if they might be permitted, would soon drive the Turks to their antient confines, and perhaps make the grand signior tremble in his capital; so that those ministers, who had advised his majesty to this step, were certainly no friends to their country, and could not have the glory of their sovereign at heart; adding, he had too much reason to believe, that such men were his own enemies also; and that he was informed some of them had gone so far, as to advise his majesty to imbrue his hands in the blood of that man, whom he had been pleased so highly to honour; whose services he had so often acknowledged; and whose only happiness it was to devote his life to his service.

The Shah, who had for some time dissembled his resentment, was now inclined to believe that his general had been misrepresented to him. The Khan, who watched every motion of his heart, found it a proper season to regain his master's good opinion. The Shah denied that any person had recommended to him to deprive his general of his life. Kouli Khan, in very tender passionate terms then represented to him, how much his majesty was a prey to evil counsellors; and as the treacherous courtiers of his father, by their intrigues would have cut off Lutf Ali Khan, at the very time that the army under his command might have saved the empire; so they were now playing off the same diabolical engines to ruin his majesty. He then produced the letters already mentioned, which he had received from several persons at court, whilst he was in Khorasan; and begged his majesty would be pleased to read them, and judge from thence of the fidelity of his ministers. After this, assuring the king of his own readiness to devote his life to his service, he retired.

Tæhmas Shah having read the letters, of which it is probable some were real, was astonished to see the perfidy of several of those in whom he had placed a confidence. But as this treasonable correspondence seemed rather to argue a

contempt of his person, than a design against his life or crown ; the gentleness of his mind naturally disposed him to forgiveness, at least to dissemble his resentment for the present.

C H A P. XLVII.

Kouli Khan seizes Shah Tæhmas. The infant Abas elected king. Intrigues of Kouli Khan. Tæhmas Shah removed to Sebsawar. The two sons of Kouli Khan nominated to the principal governments. His manifesto disclaiming the peace with the Turks. Topal Osman Basha appointed Seraskier of the Turkish army. Kouli Khan marches to Bagdat.

THE distractions of the preceding years seemed to have banished all sentiments of virtue from the hearts of the Persians ; inasmuch, that the unfortunate Shah Tæhmas had really no friends, or none who were men of abilities. The only persons who had been about him since his restoration, remarkable for their honour and capacity, were Myrza Daudam, a Georgian prince, who had been married to one of his sisters in his father's time ; and Sessie Kouli Khan ; the first of these was killed in the late action at Erivan, and the latter being taken prisoner, fell a sacrifice to the resentment of the Turks, as already related. It is probable, that the general aimed at the destruction of those, whom he apprehended would be the greatest bar to his ambition. Whether he meant to procure their removal, or only to gain the confidence of his master, that he might the more easily get him into his possession, is not material ; this conclusion we may draw from the Shah's passive conduct, that it probably encouraged Kouli Khan to proceed farther than he at first intended.

It is certain, however, when he discovered that the letters produced no effect with regard to the persons whom he desired to destroy, he naturally concluded that he was himself marked out for destruction ; for he could not be ignorant in what degree his conduct had rendered him obnoxious. He acquainted the chiefs of his army with his apprehensions, and possessed them with an opinion, that their interest and safety were inseparably connected with his own. The sentiments which they had previously entertained of the king and his court, together with the late peace concluded with the
Turks,

Turks, confirmed them in an opinion, that the king had resolved to disband the army, and to call the general and his adherents to a severe account. Tæhmas Kouli Khan artfully insinuated, that there was an expedient by which they could not only preserve themselves, but also save their country from the consequences of this ruinous peace.

He then communicated the project he had formed, of deposing Tæhmas, and putting that prince's son, Abas Myrza, an infant of six months, in his place; and since there was no other method, he would, with their approbation, enter immediately on this important business, the conduct of which they might leave to him. The matter being thus agreed, under an engagement of the most inviolable secrecy; the next step was how to prevail on the Shah to leave the city, and afford him a fair opportunity of securing his person.

Whatever designs the Shah might have, he dissembled them for the present, without seeming to be suspicious; and tho' he had destroyed the treasonable letters, yet they made such an impression on him, that he thought the general at least as faithful as his other courtiers; and therefore made no scruple to accept an invitation to see his army in review. The evolutions and appearance of his soldiers gave him great satisfaction, and might have afforded him a fair opportunity of removing the general. The sight of their prince naturally drew the attention of the subalterns and common soldiers: as he rode through the ranks, many of them declared aloud, "That if he had any particular command they were ready to execute it." The boldest traitor, whilst a plot is ripening for execution, must feel some tremors, when there is any ground to think his treason is discovered. The general, in whose hearing this declaration was made, was at first surprized; but recovering himself, he desired the Shah to tell them, "That as the command of the army was given to him, the proof of their obedience to their sovereign was to obey their general."

After the review was over, the Khan invited the Shah to a repast. This crafty Affhar, as if he had learnt from that master of treachery Mir Vais, how to carry his treason into execution², though his purpose was not bloody; had prepared this snare to entangle his sovereign. Whether fatigue, or the infusion of a drug helped to overpower the king; a small quantity of wine intoxicated him. Under these circumstances, this unhappy prince was an object of the derision of the general's creatures; and in this condition he ordered him

² See Vol. II. chap. XIX.

to be removed to an apartment in the gardens of Hazarjerib, there to be kept under a strong guard. The king's attendants, who insisted on the right of taking charge of his majesty's person, were seized by the guards, and put under confinement.

Tæhmas Kouli Khan having corrupted the great officers of state, as well as his own generals, called an assembly the next day, which he harangued to this effect: "All the world knows how much I have the interest of my country at heart, and how prodigal I have been of my life to advance the welfare of it. We have seen, by the late reign, the fatal consequences which attend a weak and pusillanimous conduct: and shall we be idle spectators of our own ruin? Shah Tæhmas has already given us a proof of his incapacity to govern. Could a prince, inspired with a common resolution, or in any degree sensible of the interest of his subjects, have made so scandalous a peace with the Turks: a people who have adopted it as a principle of their politics, as well as religion, to pillage and lay waste this country? There is no king but he, who being worthy of a crown wears it with dignity; let us hasten to dethrone a prince, whose weakness and cowardice will soon plunge us into those misfortunes, out of which we are but just recovered. We have in his son an heir of the true line, who under the conduct of wise tutors will learn the art of government. In the mean while the kingdom may be ruled by a regency, who have the honour and interest of their country at heart.

This discourse met with all the applause from those who were intirely his creatures, which his most sanguine expectations could suggest: he then demanded of the assembly, what should be done further with the king; this question alarmed them a little, fearing a design of putting him to death, which they would hardly have been wicked enough to consent to. They made answer, that nothing more was necessary to be done; however, upon maturer deliberation, to prevent the disorders which might arise from his being near Isfahan; it was agreed, that he should be removed to some remote part in the eastern provinces of the empire; and he was accordingly sent to Sebsawar^a, under a strong convoy of Ousbegs and Afghans of the Sunni religion.

The next debate turned upon his successor. As they set out on pretended principles of equity, and the general himself had declared, he meant to preserve the diadem to the royal line

^a A city in Khorasan.

line in the person of the young Abas, it could hardly be expected, even in this corrupt assembly, there should be a single person who dared to propose any other than the infant prince. Some of the most abandoned however, declared there was none so proper as the general himself, as the circumstances of the state required a prince who was capable of conducting an army. The Khan rebuked them with an air of indignation; alledging, that the hereditary rights of princes were sacred, so long as they took no step to injure the people whom they govern. He was indeed already possessed of an unlimited power, and might have embraced so favourable a conjuncture to grasp at the crown; but he could not be ignorant, that such an attempt would be attended with some danger. There must have been great numbers in his army, who were not yet entirely devoted to his service; nor could the reputation of his exploits have so firmly established his character, as to countenance so daring an attempt. We cannot say that his ambition yielded to his policy, but that he seasoned both with patience, till his army should be more accustomed to his authority, and receive more demonstrative proofs of his abilities.

The apprehensions of an insurrection had induced the general to cause a proclamation to be made in the city, that no persons should stir out of their houses; but as soon as he discovered that the neighbourhood of the army kept the people in sufficient awe, and that the unfortunate Tæhmas had no adherents who dared to oppose his pleasure, he revoked those orders, and business went on as usual. Preparations were now made for the inauguration of the young prince Abas. Tæhmas Kouli Khan entered Isfahan with great pomp, and going directly to the palace, caused public notice to be given, that the Khan and the great officers of the crown had declared Shah Tæhmas incapable of holding the reins of government; and therefore they had chosen his son Abas, the third of that name, emperor of Persia.

The young infant was accordingly brought out in his cradle, and the diadem fixed to the right side of his head, as a mark of his sovereignty; the general himself first took the oath of allegiance on the khoran, and prostrated himself in homage to the new king; all the other great officers followed his example.

Kouli Khan and his creatures now gave the law, not so much in form of a regency, as in consequence of their offices. He had acquired the ascendancy, and was in fact the sovereign. Orders were sent to all the provinces, to notify the

the accession of Abas III. to the throne; and such officers were appointed for the respective governments, as suited the pleasure and interest of the general. He then celebrated his nuptials with the aunt of the dethroned Shah. His eldest son, Riza Kouli, we have observed, was appointed governor of Khorasan; and his second son, Nezir Ali, was now made governor of Herat. His elder brother Ibrahim, one of the followers of his fortunes, was made a Khan, and the government of Tavrish was assigned him. Khorman was conferred on his next brother. Besides these, many other dispositions of the like nature were made, and the several offices of most importance were given to persons devoted to his interest. He then consulted for the further advancement of his own fortune, and the gratification of his passion for military glory. All these events passed in the month of August.

Thus did this great wicked man, under the specious pretence of promoting the honour and interest of his country, prepare the way to ascend the giddy heights of his ambition. He seemed already to look down on these instruments of his pride, as wretches who were assiduous in forging their own chains.*

The activity of his genius suffered not a moment to be lost. In order to give the greater sanction to his conduct, upon the principles of national love, he published a manifesto, disclaiming the peace which had been lately made with the Turks. It was in a more particular manner addressed to the Bascha of Bagdat, and conceived in these terms: "Be it known to you, the Bascha of Bagdat, that we claim an indubitable right of visiting the tombs of the Imams, Ali, Gherbellai, Mahallade, Mouza, and Hussein^b. We demand the delivery of all the Persians who have been taken prisoners in the late war: and as the blood of our countrymen yet smokes, and calls upon their sovereign for vengeance, there ought to be so much shed of the subjects of the grand signior, as these have spilt of the subjects of the king of Persia. We make these our sentiments known, that you may not accuse us of the dishonour of taking you by surprize. We are going soon at the head of our victorious army to breathe the sweet air of the plains of Bagdat, and to take our repose under the shadow of its walls."

Achmed,

^b These are prophets who are held in veneration by the Persians, and whose tombs are near Bagdat.

Achmed, Bascha of Bagdat, immediately acquainted the Ottoman court of the extraordinary menace which had been sent him. The Turks being thus alarmed, the grand visier and the musti were disgraced, as having been the chief advisers in making a peace with the Persians, at a time when the Ottoman armies were victorious. On the 6th of October, the horse's tail, which is the signal of war, was hung out at the seraglio at Constantinople; and the divan declared war against the Persians with the ordinary solemnities. Orders were also sent to equip a fleet of Ships on the Black Sea, to transport a large body of Janissaries and Spahis to Trebisonde, together with all kind of ammunition for the security of the strong places in Georgia. The Baschas of Natolia and Egypt were ordered to send their quotas of men to the succour of Bagdat. At the same time, Achmed Bascha put himself in a condition of holding out a long siege.

In the beginning of March this year, Topal Osman, late visier, and now Bascha of Trebisonde, 1733. was appointed generalissimo of the Ottoman army, which consisted of near 80,000 men. Tho' the caprice of the Turks had rendered it necessary to deprive him of his office of visier, his great valour and integrity, joined to a large experience, gave him the highest place in the esteem of his master the grand signior; and the great share he had in recommending the late pacific treaty with the Persians, created in him a quicker resentment of their violation of that treaty.

The grand signior acquainted the European courts of the cause of his military preparations, in consequence of the usurpation of Tæhmas Kouli Khan, under pretence of electing the infant-king Abas. The Persian general affected great unconcern at the menaces and preparations of the Turks; for tho' he knew they could send large armies into the field, yet he scrupled not to declare, that the fortune of war did not so much depend on numbers, as on the valour and experience of soldiers. He thought it his interest however to cultivate a good understanding with the Russians, and sent an ambassador to acquaint them of the accession of Abas the III. to the throne of the Persian empire. The court of St. Petersburg received this ambassador with all the honour due to ministers of his rank; and tho' the deposing of Shah Tæhmas was in itself a circumstance ungrateful to them, yet the natural interest of Russia could not but render it agreeable, to find that the Turks were threatned to be humbled by the victorious troops of Tæhmas Kouli Khan.

In the mean time, the Persian general having collected all his forces from the eastern provinces, and engaged also a body of Arabians, the plains of Hamadan were appointed for a general rendezvous. The army consisted of near 80,000 fighting men; and as the fortune of Kouli Khan, and the bravery of his men promised some remarkable success, the provinces sent in their respective quotas of troops with great alacrity. Of the grandees of the court of Isfahan, some through hope of promotion, and others through fear of the resentment of Kouli Khan, were induced to accompany him in this war; which answered a double purpose to him, as it prevented their caballing in his absence, and by means of their influence in their respective provinces, put him in a better capacity of carrying on the war with vigour.

Tæhmas Kouli Khan at the head of this formidable army, began his march from Isfahan in the month of February, directing his course towards Hamadan. As soon as he arrived on the plains near that city, he made a general review of his forces, and encouraged his men by assuring them, that he did not doubt before it was long, he should fix his standards on the ramparts of Constantinople.

The first operation of the campaign was the siege of Kermansha^c. Shah Tæhmas had certainly erred in his politics, in yielding up this place to the Turks, as its vicinity to Persia must necessarily have occasioned great jealousies between the subjects, as well as the governments of both countries. A great part of the inhabitants were Persians; so that Tæhmas Kouli Khan was hardly arrived there with his whole army, when the inhabitants opened their gates to him. The unfortunate governor was put to death, in return for the violence on Sessie Kouli Khan at Constantinople; this execution was performed in the sight of the whole army. Several other Turks had the same fate^d. After appointing Abdal Baki Khan as governor, and leaving a garrison of his own people in this city, Tæhmas Kouli Khan began his march towards Bagdat. This was the favourite object he had in view: he knew that Achmed, Basna of that city and its dependencies,

^c This is a great city, which De Lisle's map includes in Irak Agami, but it is generally understood to be in Kourdestan.

^d I cannot help remarking, how fond some writers of historical accounts of Persia are of shedding blood: if any number of persons are put to death, they make whole cities massacred. Again, if an army consists of 50,000 men, they mention them as 100,000; but this last error seems to arise from the numerous followers of the camp.

pendencies, had made the necessary preparations for its defence; but he flattered himself, that by taking the field so much earlier than the Turks could collect an army to oppose him, he should bring the Bascha to a submission.

The Turks had the precaution to send detachments of their forces to guard the defiles on the Persian side, which cover the plains towards the frontiers of Bagdat. These however were easily forced; the Turks having neither skill, courage, nor numbers to stop the progress of the Persian army. Traversing the great forrest between the cities Mendeli and Nezereth, he passed the river Synnee, on the banks of which the Turks had in vain erected several batteries. Then coming into the plains of Bagdat, he crossed the river Kentoul, which is a branch of the Tigris, and after a march of twenty days, he arrived the 10th of April under the walls of Bagdat.

C H A P. XLVIII.

Description of Bagdat. This city is besieged. The conduct of Kouli Khan. The vigilance of Achmed Bascha. Stratagem of Topal Osman. The Persian army defeated with great slaughter. Letter of Achmed Bascha to the grand signior. Great rejoicings at the Ottoman court for the victory over the Persians. Topal Osman sends his army into quarters.

BEFORE we enter upon any circumstance relating to the siege of Bagdat, it may afford some light to the subject, to give a short account of this famous city, in the neighbourhood of which formerly stood the metropolis of one of the most antient and most potent monarchies in the world. The place is generally called Bagdat or Bagdad, tho' some writers preserve the antient name of Babylon. The reason of thus confounding these two cities is, that the Tigris and Euphrates forming one common stream before they disembrace into the Persian gulph, are not unfrequently mentioned as one and the same river. It is certain that the present Bagdat is situated on the Tigris, but the antient Babylon,

* Babylon, the seat of the kings of Assyria.

f The waters of this river, which is called Didgelie by the Turks and Persians, are reckoned extremely wholesome, and not less agreeable to the taste. This river issues with a great noise from

Babylon, according to all historians sacred and prophane, was on the Euphrates. The ruins of the latter, which geographical writers place about fifteen leagues to the south of Bagdat, are now so much effaced, that there are hardly any vestiges of them to point out the situation. In the time of the emperor Theodosius there was only a great park remaining, in which the kings of Persia bred wild beasts for the amusement of hunting.

- Bagdat, formerly the seat of the Abbassinean Caliphs, is the capital of Irac-Arabi. This country is reckoned 120 leagues long, and 80 broad, though great part of it is very poorly inhabited. It includes several districts, and is one of the most important governments in the Ottoman empire. The city is situated on the east side of the Tigris, on the banks of which it extends about two miles. It was built on the ruins of the antient Seleucia, near the year 760. The government of the Caliphs being extinct, the city was united to the kingdom of Persia about the year 1250, but was taken by Amurath the IVth in 1638, and has remained under the dominion of the Ottoman empire, notwithstanding the repeated efforts of the Persian monarchs to recover it.

- The fortification is composed of lofty thick walls of brick, covered with earth, strengthened by great towers in form of bastions placed at certain distances, and protected by a deep ditch, which can be filled at any time by the waters of the Tigris. The citadel is on the north side, and commands the river. The whole fortification is furnished with near 200 pieces of cannon*. The garrison generally consists of a body of ten thousand men, and in time of war more than twice that number, besides the ordinary militia, which is 12,000 men. From hence it is easy to conceive, that under an experienced commander this place could hardly be taken by an eastern army, any otherwise than by famine. Its happy situation on the Tigris is an advantage which enables

it, from a cavern to the north of the city Diarbekir, near which there is a very good stone bridge over it. Before it reaches this place it takes in several other rivers, and running to the eastward is augmented by the Heini, Ferdgil, Bicheri, and others which come from the east. After passing Bagdat it receives a great increase from the Diala, and meets the Euphrates not far from Dgenafir. Near Vafit it divides into many branches, and forms several islands, called the islands of the Arabian river. At Corna it again joins the Euphrates, and disembogues itself into the Persian gulph below Bassora, its whole course being computed 400 leagues.

* These were formerly only six pounders, but of late some of them have been exchanged for heavier.

it, upon the apprehension of an enemy, to lay in a large supply of provisions.

The suburbs being very extensive, and raised on both sides of the Tigris, there is a communication by a bridge of boats, the only one which that river will admit of, as it is broad and deep, and in its ordinary course very rapid. At certain seasons it swells to a prodigious height, and overflowing the country, occasions many morasses on the side opposite to the city. Among these are several towns and villages, whose inhabitants are said to be the antient Caldeans. These people are of a particular religion, which they pretend is that of Seth: there are also a great number of Arabs in this neighbourhood, who render travelling dangerous. The advantage of the Tigris is so considerable with regard to commerce, that altho' the climate is excessive hot, and in other respects far from being agreeable, yet there are a great number of inhabitants in this city. The greatest part of these are Persians, Armenians, and Jews. The two last occupy near half the city, and drive a considerable trade with Bassoraⁿ, and the inland parts. The Jews are the more engaged to live here, from a reverence to the sepulchre of the prophet Ezekiel, which it is pretended is a day's journey from the city.

Tahmas Kouli Khan having found means to corrupt some of the inhabitants of this important city, made his advances with great confidence. However, he was in want of artillery, and of course in no capacity to make regular approaches, had he possessed the skill of an European general. His great business was to invest the city, and force the inhabitants to a submission by famine, or subdue them by stratagem. Myrza Khan, an officer of great valour and experience, who had been an early follower of the fortunes of Kouli Khan, was sent with 10,000 men a league up the Tigris, and passed the river near the suburbs of Kouch Kaleffi¹. This detachment executed their business without any considerable loss: after pillaging the town, they fixed their camp in that neighbourhood^k. Here they found a

They have covered vessels called Teknes, in which they bring the produce of India and other countries up the Tigris. There are also others call'd Daneks and Gurabs.

¹ Signifies in Arabic the bird tower.

^k It is reported that the waters of the Tigris soon after swell'd to a great degree, and cut off all communication from the main body of the Persian army: that the Turks took the opportunity to attack this officer, who maintained his ground very gallantly; but being over-powered by numbers was obliged to retreat after

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piece of cannon of a very great size, which the Bascha, notwithstanding his great circumspection, had neglected to bring away, or render useless. But this was the only battering cannon in the Persian army, and was by no means sufficient to make a breach, tho' it was used with some success, and helped to intimidate the inhabitants.

Bagdat was now closely blocked up on both sides the Tigris, by an army of 80,000 men, so that neither troops, ammunition, nor provisions could be thrown into the town. The Turkish garrison within the walls consisted of about 20,000 men, besides the militia. They laboured however under the great inconveniency of having a number of Persian inhabitants, some of whom might be supposed in the interest of the Persian general; so that Achmed had his attention divided both within and without the walls. But in order to prevent any evil consequence from hence, tho' the majority were much more disposed to live under the Turkish government, than the Persians; he caused some of the principal among them to take up their lodging in the citadel, as hostages for the good behaviour of their countrymen. Tæhmas Kouli Khan having thus cantoned his army, and blockaded the city, expected to oblige Achmed Bascha to a surrender by famine: nor could he well have failed, if his vanity had not got the better of his prudence.

Topal Osman Bascha, though an able and experienced officer, and zealous in the last degree for the glory of his master, and the welfare of his country; would hardly have been able to relieve Bagdat, and prevent its being dismembered from the Ottoman empire, had the Persian general been less confident of his success. When this Bascha was appointed Seraskier of the Ottoman army, his credit at the port was very great; yet the succours and reinforcements of money, troops, and ammunition, which were promised him, were sent only in small proportions, and in a very irregular manner, so that he was unavoidably obliged to remain several months in a state of inaction.

During this interval, Tæhmas Kouli Khan, already anticipating his triumphs in imagination, wrote to the Bascha of a considerable loss. And that this circumstance, in a great measure, contributed to the defeat of the Persian general some time after. But what Turks these were who defeated him is not said, unless it was after the battle of Kerkoud; and as Topal Osman, as well as Achmed Bascha, are silent on this head, I must leave Myrza Khan to be disposed of as the reader pleases.

General in chief.

of Mosul, summoning him to surrender, adding words to this effect^m: “ I am informed that a certain Turkish general, whose slow advances give me no great idea of his courage, has been a long time in march, intending to oppose my conquest. Let him know, that I desire he will make more speed; and, in order to shorten his way, I will meet him with part of my forces, which are sufficient to make him repent of his rashness. I will not only take his little army, but himself also as a child in his Bechikⁿ.” Topal Osman being informed of this message, replied: “ The grand signior my master has armies as numerous as the sands of the seas, and many chiefs to conduct his forces; but he has chosen my feeble arm, with only a small army, to confound thy pride. It is true, I am lame^o, old, and sickly, but I hope by the assistance of the almighty, that thou wilt meet the fate of Nimrod^p.”

In order to facilitate the junction of his troops, as well as to advance nearer Bagdat, Topal Osman decamped from Diarbekir, and marched along the banks of the Tigris; he passed this river at Mosul, and continued his march towards Cheresene. This province is subject to the Ottoman empire, and had been laid waste by the Persians. He then directed his course to Kerkoud^q, a city forty leagues distant from Mosul, where the Bascha of the province resides. He had several considerable branches of the Tigris to pass, besides the rivers Hazir, Jarb, and Altun; over some of these he was obliged to transport his troops on floats, which retarded his march; whilst this army was forming, by the several detachments and small parties which joined him from different

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^m Messages of defiance have been long diffused among European generals; nor would I have inserted these, but to give some idea of the character of Tæhmas Kouli Khan.

ⁿ This word signifies cradle and litter; Topal Osman on account of his infirmities being obliged to use the latter.

^o Topal in the Turkish language signifies lame, and was an appellation given to Osman, according to the custom in Turkey, in consequence of a wound he received, which really lamed him, the circumstances of which I shall relate hereafter.

^p The Turks have a fabulous tradition, that the pride of Nimrod, who equalled himself with God, was chastised by a singular providence, in a fly creeping up his nose to his brain, with which he died in excessive pain; and the Bascha here expresses himself with humility, by way of contrast to the insolence of Kouli Khan.

^q This place is also called Cherazour, and is generally esteemed the capital of Kourdistan.

rent parts. In this situation, if Kouli Khan had put himself at the head of a body of his best troops, and at the same time left a sufficient number, which he could have done, to stop the communications to Bagdat, in all probability he might have rendered the utmost efforts of the Seraskier ineffectual. But his vanity betrayed him : elate with his successes, which hitherto had met with no interruption, he affected to treat the Turks as enemies not in the least formidable.

While the Turkish army was forming, Kouli Khan erected two forts about two leagues from Bagdat, one on each side of the Tigris, which communicated by a bridge of boats. He then caused a great number of houses to be built upon the banks of the river : in some of these the principal officers resided, and lodged their wives and household : others were occupied by part of the soldiery, or used by sutlers and artificers, with shops well supplied. The same abundance seemed to reign here, as in the richest city in the heart of Persia.

It is probable, that Kouli Khan was actuated by motives of policy, in building these houses ; for on the one hand, this was likely to excite his troops to the greater bravery, in order to save their effects from being plundered, and their wives and children from captivity ; and, on the other, the Turkish garrison might be driven to despair, by seeing the enemy build a city under their walls. However, it is certain, by such methods, and by his threatening summons, the inhabitants were intimidated to a very great degree. He let them know continually, that they should have quarter and good usage, if they surrendered ; adding, that Topal Osman was absolutely unable to relieve them ; and, if they obliged him to give an assault, he would make a general massacre, or sell into slavery all who should escape the sword. The extreme necessity the town laboured under occasioned such murmurings, that it required all the address of Achmed Bascha to prevent an insurrection. He was therefore obliged to punish some, and to soothe others ; feigning false expresses from Topal Osman, that he was in full march, and just on the point of relieving them.

The inhabitants were likewise intimidated by the stratagems of Kouli Khan, who often sent from his camp in the night detached parties of several thousands, both horse and foot, with orders to make a long round, and enter the camp another way, with colours flying, as if they were fresh reinforcements. To insult the misery of the inhabitants, as if he knew their distress, he sent Achmed Bascha a present of some cart-loads of water melons, desiring him to divert his
hunger.

hunger. Achmed returned his compliments, and sent a handsome present of the best bread; observing that with such he made a shift to gratify his own hunger, and that of the citizens. Indeed the Basfa played his part so well, that Kouli Khan was really ignorant to what an extremity the city was reduced. The vigilance and abilities of the governor, had hitherto defeated the arts of the Persian general; but matters were at last brought to such an extremity, after being blocked up three months, that no kind of necessaries could have been procured for four days longer; so that the town must have inevitably fallen into the hands of a cruel and enraged enemy.

Topal Osman, having now increased his army to near 80,000; in his march to Kerkoud had taken two Persian prisoners. He ordered them to be brought before him, treated them civilly, and enquired if they were well acquainted with the by-roads and private ways to Bagdat. Upon their answering in the affirmative, he told them, that as upon that account they were much fitter for his purpose than any of his own people, who would certainly be taken; if they would undertake so bold an action, and deliver a letter into the hands of Achmed Basfa, the governor of Bagdat, he would give each of them a thousand sequins before they set out; and that they might expect greater rewards if they proved faithful, as the letter was of the greatest consequence. However he demanded of them to swear fidelity to him, to which they consented. The letter was to this effect: "As I have not yet been joined by all the troops I expect, I am obliged to march very slowly, in order to give the rest time to come up, before I am too near to Tæhmas Kouli Khan, against whom I am not yet able to make head; therefore I desire you will have still some farther patience: keep yourself close within your walls, and husband, to the best advantage, what provisions and necessaries are yet left."

The two Persians were no honefter than he expected: they received their sequins, and hastened to the camp of Kouli Khan, in hopes of a further reward from their own general. The letter produced all the effects the Seraskier could desire. The expectations of Tæhmas Kouli Khan swelled to the highest degree; and in the triumph of his imagination he looked upon the Seraskier as already vanquished.

By the first motions of Topal Osman's army towards Kerkoud, it seemed as if he had intended to go directly to

Bagdat ; but as he must have been obliged to pass thro' a barren desert, where the troops would have suffered greatly, he returned to the Allan, where that river discharges itself into the Tigris: the army then marched by the mountain of Geobar along the Tigris, till they came to Duljeiluck^r, about twelve leagues from Bagdat.

Tæhmas Kouli Khan having advice of the march of the Turks, detached thirty thousand men, mostly cavalry, hoping that the enemy, by the favour of the night, as they were pitching their tents, or decamping, might be surprized. The general of the detachment having taken two Turkish prisoners, who reported that Topal Osman had an army of above 100,000 men ; this determined him to acquaint Kouli Khan of his information ; and that not being willing to venture against a force said to be so powerful, he waited his orders. Kouli Khan, upon this, immediately marched at the head of his forces, which were near 70,000, leaving a considerable body of his men^c before Bagdat.

The Turkish army decamped the evening of the 18th of July, and marched towards Kerkoud, near which the Seraskier proposed to encamp. About sun-rising, the advanced guard of the Turkish army, commanded by Boulad Achmed, Bascha of Adene, met a detachment of the Persians, and a skirmish ensued. Had the Seraskier been disposed to act on the defensive, the antient bed of the Tigris was before him, which formed a deep foss ; but he chose to favour the spirit of his troops : and tho' it was attended with some difficulty, he passed this ditch with his army and artillery. Having reached the plain, he ranged his forces in battalia, in the form of a crescent, dividing them into five different bodies. He himself commanded the troops of Romania^t in the center ; Abdallah Aga was at the head of the right wing with the Janissaries ; the Kourds, and other different troops, under Ibrahim, late Bascha of Conie, forming the left wing. Mahommed Bascha commanded in the rear.

Tæhmas Kouli Khan had hardly time to make a disposition of his forces ; and his ground was full of hillocks of sand : however, he divided his men into ten different columns. As he had intended to make the attack, he was a little disconcerted in seeing the Bascha of Adene, with the Turkish cavalry

^r Called also Dugkuru.

^c This body is said to have been 10,000, and we accordingly find they were put to flight immediately when the Turks sallied out.

^t These European Turks are esteemed the bravest.

cavalry that composed their van-guard, advance upon him with great fury ; yet his presence of mind was not wanting : he animated his men, and exposed himself so greatly to danger in the heat of the action, that he had two horses killed under him.

At length the Turkish cavalry gave way, and were pushed as far as their infantry ; but these made so good a countenance, that the fury of the Persians was stopped. The Persians thus appearing superior, some of the Turkish officers counselled the Seraskier to make a retreat to his camp ; to which he declared, that he would rather perish than do any thing that had the appearance of flight. He then ordered the Troops of Romania in the center, and the Janissaries in the right wing, to be led up against the center of the Persian army, consisting of 15,000 foot, which soon gave way.

The Kourds, and other different people, who composed the left wing of the Turkish army, and whose chief attention was to wait an opportunity of pillage, were now induced to fall on the right wing of the Persians : these maintained their ground very gallantly for some time. Nadir had taken the precaution not only to break up the ways towards Mosul ^u, but also to send a detachment of 3000 Arabs ^w, supported by as many Persians, to guard the passes on that side, against the Bascha of that place, in case he should attempt to assist Topal Osman : but the Bascha advanced, and having found means to corrupt the Arabs, these not only abandoned the pass, but joining the Turks, obliged the Persians to retire ; and then advancing with him, fell upon the main body of the Persians in flank, whilst the whole Turkish army were already engaged. The Persians could not support the shock : Tæhmas Kouli Khan did all that was possible to rally them, but in vain. The standard bearer ^x,

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^u Near this place is a very remarkable ruin, in which is an arch, that appears to have been the frontispiece of a great temple, which the inhabitants, who deal in the marvellous, imagine to be part of Nineveh, and that it was built by Ninus the son of Balos, or Belus ; they shew in the neighbourhood the place where the prophet Jonas inhabited, in honour of whom they have built a little chapel, which they visit with devotion : their tradition concerning the prophet differs not much from that of the scripture.

^w This circumstance is not mentioned by those who are of the Turkish interest, but is not, I believe, without foundation ; because, we do not find that Nadir ever afterwards chose their perfidious alliance.

^x See Vol. I. Chap. XXXVII.

either through fear, or being closely pressed, rode off the field ; and a total rout ensued.

The scene of this action being a sandy plain, and the duration of it not less than eight hours, the Persians were so much fatigued, that their flight was rendered the more difficult. Clouds of dust, with the scorching heat of the weather, without a possibility of getting water, added to their distress, and exposed them the more to be slaughtered by their pursuers. Their loss upon this occasion, was not less than 30,000 men, cavalry and infantry ; with all their baggage, their camels, and harquebusses. The latter did very little execution, in comparison to the Turkish artillery.

The number of prisoners taken by the Turks amounted to about 3000 : their victory however cost them dear, for they lost near as many men as the Persians. Topal Osman ascribed the glory of this day to the bravery of Abdallah, the Kiaya, and the Janissaries, whom he led on to action. Abdallah being quite spent with fatigue, fainted in the field ; the good Topal Osman supported him in his arms, and when he recovered, assured him that the grand signior should be informed of his merit, and how much the victory, under God, had been owing to him, and to the bravery of the soldiers he commanded. The Seraskier then dispatched messengers to Diarbekir, Bagdat, and other governments, as well as to Constantinople, with an account of the success of the Ottoman arms.

In the mean while, Achmed Basha, with his garrison at Bagdat, sallied out, and attacked the Persians, whom Kouli Khan had left in their entrenchments : they made a gallant defence, but were at length obliged to yield to numbers. Here the besieged found a supply of corn and other provisions, which was in the highest degree welcome to them after so much distress.

Achmed no sooner received the joyful news of Topal Osman's signal victory, than he also dispatched a messenger to Constantinople, to inform his master the grand signior of the state of affairs in that great city. As this letter appears to be genuine, and gives an idea not only of the circumstances in which the Turks were, but likewise of the Oriental manner of writing, it may perhaps be acceptable.

“ May God be ever praised and blessed ; for, by his grace,
“ the commander of the sultan's armies, the ever invincible
“ Topal Osman Basha, on whom may the most high ever
“ shed his bounties ; and may he find mercy before the
“ throne of God, at the sounding of the trumpet. He has
“ deli-

“ delivered us from the afflictions we have suffered, since
 “ we were besieged by the Persian armies. The distress of
 “ the garrison and inhabitants of this city was incredible ;
 “ and is beyond description. We were surrounded ; we
 “ were blocked up ; we were encompassed for the space of
 “ a whole league. During three long months, Tæhmas
 “ Kouli Khan, with a body of his troops, pitched his tents
 “ at Imam Azem, on the side of the Tigris towards Persia,
 “ about half a league from the city, where he fortified him-
 “ self with strong lines and redoubts ; and used all means to
 “ frighten us to a surrender.

“ Sometimes he detached part of his troops, without our
 “ being able to perceive it ; and ordered them to enter ano-
 “ ther quarter of his camp, with drums beating, and colours
 “ flying, and with the sound of trumpets, as if they were
 “ fresh forces coming from all quarters to his assistance. He
 “ built forts on each side the Tigris, well mounted with ar-
 “ tillery ; so that all communication was cut off. He was con-
 “ tinually summoning us to surrender ; offering good terms
 “ if we would capitulate, and threatening us with the sword
 “ and captivity if we delayed ; endeavouring to excite the
 “ people to mutiny. Your slave took every method to keep
 “ up their spirits ; I held assemblies of all the people of war ;
 “ I told them from time to time that I had advice from the
 “ invincible Topal Osman Bascha, on whom may the blef-
 “ sings of God descend, that he was at such a place, and
 “ would soon come and pour upon the enemy the irresistible
 “ force of the Ottoman arms, ever victorious, and we
 “ should soon be delivered.

“ On the first day of the moon Sefer ², the visier Topal
 “ Osman Bascha sent me an express from Kerkoud, by which
 “ I received his high commands, letting me know that he
 “ was arrived at that place. I immediately read his letter
 “ publicly, that all the people and inhabitants might be ac-
 “ quainted with the news ; they would hardly believe the
 “ letter to be genuine ; I was obliged to shew it to every
 “ one, that they might with their own eyes view the seal
 “ and hand-writing of the great commander, and prevent
 “ their despair.

“ On the fourth of ² Sefer in the morning, Tæhmas Kou-
 “ li Khan ranged his army in battle array, and marched to-
 “ wards Vugium, leaving a large body of his troops behind
 “ him to block us up. As soon as our garrison and the in-

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“ habi-

² The 13th of July.² The 16th of July.

“ habitants of the city were informed of this, their anxiety
 “ was renewed. Sometimes they were clamorous to have
 “ the gates opened, that they might sally forth : sometimes
 “ they were determined to wait for further news : every one,
 “ men and women, young and old, continued without in-
 “ termission, their hands clasped, and their eyes turned to
 “ heaven, beseeching God and his prophet to grant success
 “ to our arms.

“ On the ninth^b of Sefer, just at break of day, as we
 “ were lying in the dust, offering our prayers to God, we
 “ perceived on the side of the desert, and towards the gate
 “ Karani Capli, an officer with twenty-five horse-men, with
 “ their sabres in their hands. They cried with a loud voice,
 “ and said, open to us the gates, for we bring good tidings
 “ to Achmed Basha. At first your slave believing them to
 “ be spies, doubted to give them entrance. But as the Aga
 “ who commanded them was known to several people from
 “ the walls, I caused the gate to be opened. As soon as he
 “ was entered, they began to call aloud, O inhabitants of
 “ Bagdat forget your sorrows and rejoice, for the great and
 “ mighty commander Topal Osman Basha, has entirely
 “ vanquished the army of the Persians; he has cut in pieces
 “ 60,000 of the enemy : Tæhmas Kouli Khan is fled un-
 “ distinguished among those whom our sabres could not
 “ reach.

“ The officer then delivered to me the letter which the
 “ invincible visier had wrote, imparting to me the news of
 “ his victory. No sooner was this spread abroad, than the
 “ whole city seemed as people risen from the dead : they
 “ said with one common voice, let us fall upon the remains
 “ of the Persians before they have time to fly. The gari-
 “ son assembled with the principal inhabitants of the city,
 “ and your slave at their head, fell upon the Persians ; we
 “ poured in upon them like the mighty torrents, like the
 “ thunder of the waters of the Almighty ; they resisted for
 “ some time, but at length gave way to our victorious arms,
 “ and fell under the edge of our sabres. All their artillery,
 “ ammunition and provisions, which were in great abun-
 “ dance, by the favour of the prophet came into our pos-
 “ session.

“ A

^b The 21st of July.

^c We may allow people to magnify their success extremely on such an occasion as this; and this happens to be double the number which the Persians really lost.

“ A great number of people who had no horses, and
“ others who were too old to bear arms, bowing their heads,
“ and crossing their arms, and covering themselves with the
“ dress of the grave, having in a most supplicant manner
“ cried for mercy ; my bowels were moved with compas-
“ sion towards them, I pitied their condition, and ordered
“ that quarter should be given them, with liberty to retire,
“ As for those who fled over the plains, it was no longer a
“ fight, it was a hunting in the forest, a chase of the beasts
“ of the desert. Our victorious troops cutting down every
“ thing before them, pursued the enemy with the sword.

“ The next day we returned thanks to God and his pro-
“ phet : we planted on the walls the standards of the van-
“ quished enemy, with all the other trophies of our victory.
“ After the public rejoicings and thanksgivings were over,
“ we buried in their tombs such of our people as had the
“ glory to receive the crown of martyrdom. We then cut
“ off the heads of all the enemy who were slain ; we piled
“ them in heaps on the field of battle ; and threw the bodies
“ into the Tigris. The day after, the great and mighty
“ conqueror, Topal Osman Basha, arrived with his victo-
“ rious army at Imam Azem, the suburbs of Bagdat, whe-
“ ther the people of all ranks, young and old, ran to lick
“ the dust of his feet.

“ The day following, I, your slave, accompanied by the
“ Bashas and great officers here, with my whole retinue,
“ and all the principal inhabitants of Bagdat, went with the
“ great Seraskier, and returned thanks in the mosque of
“ Imam Azem, for the victories obtained, and for the end
“ of our great afflictions. I send you this account, under
“ the providence of God, by Chassoucar Aga, whom may
“ the Almighty safely conduct.”

Topal Osman remained with the Turkish army two days
on the field of battle burying the dead : this victory cost very
dear, not only by the death of so many common soldiers,
but also by the loss of many persons of great distinction. The
wounded, who were in great numbers, he sent to Mosul.
Among these he found the father-in-law and nephew of Kou-
li Khan, whom he treated with great generosity ; and after
their wounds were dressed, he sent them to the Persian gene-
ral, with some propositions concerning a peace^g. To the
latter no reply was made ; but he acknowledged his obliga-
tions

^g Others mention their having been sent to Constantinople ;
but I believe Topal Osman sought to appease rather than to en-
rage Kouli Khan.

tions to the Seraskier for the humane treatment of his relations, and that he hoped e'er long to return the obligation after the same manner.

The Turkish general no sooner received a report of the circumstances of his own army after the battle, than he sent one of his favourite^d officers to Constantinople with the news of his victory, which was received with all possible demonstrations of joy, and magnified beyond the truth. The spirit of the court however was a little damped, when a second messenger arrived eight days afterwards, to acquaint the grand signior, that the army was in great distress for want of provisions, the country round Bagdat having been ruined by the Persians; and moreover, that tho' he had been victorious, yet his losses were so great, that he requested an immediate and large supply of recruits; that as for himself, his age and infirmities were such, that he begged his highness would give the command of the army to one more able to serve him, as the duty required all the strength of youth, as well as the experience of old age; for he foresaw that Kouli Khan would soon return with a numerous army, when he should not be in so good a condition to receive him as before.

This news was however supposed to be in a great measure owing to the modesty of the Bascha; so that instead of making such provision as had been represented as necessary, they loaded him with new honours which he did not desire. His son-in-law was made Beglerbeg of Romania, and his son a Bascha of three tails: he had also leave to dispose of all military employments, and to distribute rewards according to the merit of his officers; and if he should think it most for the honour and safety of the empire, he might also negotiate a peace. To these great honours and signal instances of the confidence reposed in him, were added the highest commendations of his valour and conduct.

In the mean time, the court would not be persuaded, that after so signal a victory there could be such a necessity of succours as the Bascha represented: the sight of the three thousand Persian prisoners filled their minds so much with the idea of conquest, and a fond persuasion of the distressed condition of the Persian army, that a sufficient care was not taken to answer the demands of the Seraskier. The great distance of the army, and the poverty of the state, was a farther reason
why

^d On these occasions the Turkish generals give their messengers a golden ornament, in form of a plume, with three points, by which means the people where he passes are to understand he is the messenger of victory or good news.

why the court was so remiss, whilst their general seemed to be the only man who knew how much the strength and valour of the enemy was to be dreaded. He had accordingly made such a disposition of his troops in the neighbouring country, as was necessary to their support, with orders to assemble in the plains near Bagdat the end of August, himself, with 30,000 men, remaining at Kerkoud.

C H A P. XLIX.

Tæhmas Kouli Khan prepares for another action : his stratagem. Topal Osman obliged to continue in his command. Poulak Basha abandons the post of Takajak. Topal Osman collects his forces, and meets the Persians. Battle of Leilam the 22d of October. Second battle of Leilam. Topal Osman killed, and the Turkish army routed. Abdallah Kouproli, Basha of Cairo, appointed generalissimo.

TÆHMAS Kouli Khan retired with the remains of his army to Hamadan : having been always accustomed to victory, he was the more sensibly affected by his defeat, especially as there was reason to fear that his glory was nipped, at the very time when to appearance it was ripening to its full maturity. However, as no reverse of fortune could subdue his mind, he seemed yet to triumph in the assurance of future success ; and the perfect knowledge he had, how dear the enemy had purchased their victory, and that the treacherous conduct of his Arabian allies had been the chief cause of the disaster which befell him ; he encouraged his soldiers, applauded their conduct, and commended their valour, in the same flattering terms, as if he had been himself the victor. He acknowledged the mistakes he had committed in terms the most engaging ; being convinced that past misfortunes can be retrieved only by future conduct. He made his own and that of the army one common cause ; and by reminding them of their valour upon so many occasions, he assured them they should have such an opportunity of revenging themselves, as should intirely efface the remembrance of an accident, for which they were no way to blame. Thus he ingratiated himself with the common soldiers, as well as the officers, in such a manner, that he kept the army in good spirits, and without the least reluctance to try their fortune in another battle.

As

As a proof of what he advanced, he was hardly arrived at Hamadan, when he wrote to Achmed Basha, the governor of Bagdat, that notwithstanding his misfortunes in the last campaign, he did not in the least hold himself as vanquished; that he was sensible of the faults he had committed, and intended to mend them: and as he was determined to make war like a generous enemy, therefore he acquainted him, that he might be prepared; for that early next year he would take the field with a more numerous and powerful army than the former, and meet him once more at Bagdat.

How ostentatious soever such a message might seem, it not only served to keep his soldiers in spirits, but also as a stratagem to deceive the Turks; for tho' they might deem such menaces not entirely as an effect of his vanity, with regard to his intentions of returning into Turkey, yet they did not dream that his real design was to fall on them before the winter came on. For this purpose he sent to Isfahan for recruits, and commanded his second son Nefr Ali, the governor of Herat, to join him with all the forces under his command. Thus he soon completed an army, very near equal to that, with which he had made his late expedition into Turkey.

Achmed, Basha of Bagdat, had too much penetration to be ignorant of the genius of the Persian general, and too good intelligence to doubt of his intentions of returning into Turkey; but whether that should happen sooner or later, he took all possible care to put the city in a state of defence, and to bring a supply of provisions by means of the Tigris, which he could not collect near his own district, the province for many leagues round Bagdat having been laid waste.

Topal Osman on his part was still in want of ammunition and other necessaries for his army, and in no condition to act offensively against Persia: he therefore contented himself with sending Poulak Basha, with six thousand men, to take possession of the pass of Takajak, which is the entrance into Turkey on the side of Hamadan.

Affairs were in this situation, when advice arrived at Kerkoud, that the son of Tæhmas Kouli Khan was upon his march to the assistance of his father, with a large body of Afghans and Abdoltees. The Seraskier dispatched a courier to the port with this intelligence, representing to the ministers, as he had often done before, the necessity there was of sending large supplies of men, money, and ammunition to the army intended to act against Kouli Khan. He earnestly requested at the same time, that in consideration of his age and infirmities, they would allow him to resign the command
of

of the army in favour of Achmed Bascha, who in all respects was fitter than himself to discharge the duties of such an important trust.

The grand signior, in consideration of his request, and his great services, had actually determined to comply with his desire, and appointed him Bascha of Cutaya*, and Beglerbeg of Natolia. The disposition for these changes was already made, when a fresh courier arrived at the seraglio from Topal Osman, with advice that the Persians had forced the pass of Takajak, and that their general was in full march at the head of a mighty army; requesting that they would immediately order the succours, which he had so often and so warmly solicited.

An extraordinary divan was held upon this subject; the disposition of those changes just mentioned was suspended, and Topal Osman ordered to continue in his command of the army.

Poulak Bascha had been sent by the Seraskier with 6000 men, to post himself at Takajak, which is the pass on the frontiers of Turkey. Accordingly he took possession of it with his troops. On the 12th of October, Kouli Khan's Afghans advanced towards him: the Bascha having neglected to fortify his post, or struck with a panic, retired with his men, and abandoned this important pass to the enemy. The Seraskier was filled with such indignation and resentment, that he would have ordered his head to be struck off in the field, notwithstanding he had behaved gallantly in the battle of Kerkoud, if several of the most distinguished officers, who were in great esteem with him, had not begged his life.

Topal Osman now found himself in a very dangerous situation; a fierce and formidable enemy was advancing on him, whilst the succours he had solicited from the port, he knew by experience, were not to be depended on: the Bascha of Syria was his particular friend, and exerted himself in collecting all the forces possible; but these were not sufficient. Syria was once a powerful kingdom, and could of itself send large armies into the field; but since it has been under the dominion of the Turks, it is so far ruined, that the Bascha could hardly collect 12000 infantry, with a small body of horse; neither of which had any reputation as soldiers. The Seraskier had also collected several bodies of forces from Mosul:

* This is a district about three days journey from Constantinople.

Mosul^t; tho' the inhabitants had been so terrified at the approach of a Persian army, that numbers were disposed to flight, till they found themselves surrounded by roving Arabs, and other enemies; they resolved therefore to assist in the common cause of their country, and endeavour to withstand the torrent of the Persian arms. In the mean while, the garrison of Diarbekir was also sent to join Topal Osman, and some tribes of the Arabians, who had been of such service in the Affair of Kerkoud.

The Seraskier, in order to facilitate the junction of his forces, marched to the plains of Aronia, near the city Mendeli, where he mustered near 100,000 men; happy for the Turks if they had been all equal in discipline and valour to the Persian troops. Here the prudent Topal Osman entrenched his army in an advantageous situation, to prevent a surprize, and enable him to act as circumstances might require.

Tæhmas Kouli Khan being informed of the situation of the Turks, marched directly towards them, and arrived within sight of their army the 21st of October. In the mean while, he ordered a detachment to make a circuit by the forest of Nezereth, and by passing the Tigris intercept a rich caravan going for Smyrna and Aleppo, and then to join him near the plains of Aronia, which they performed^g.

On the 22d of October, Topal Osman Bascha acquainted his Officers, that he proposed to keep in his trenches on the defensive; but at the same time let his troops know, that such as were disposed, might skirmish with the enemy.

The Janissaries of Cairo, and some troops of Romania, who had not been in the battle of Kerkoud, thought their honour concerned to perform some signal action; and being joined by some other of the troops, and by the Arabs, whom the Seraskier had taken into his pay, they sallied from the entrenchments, and attacked the Persians. The soil was dry and dusty to a great degree; the wind favoured the Turks, and they took the proper advantage of it. They came to an engagement, or rather a skirmish, which lasted about four hours. The Seraskier perceiving his men had the superiority, gave orders for others to join them; this deter-

^t This is a great city sixty leagues above Bagdat, and forty below Diarbekir, on the western banks of the Tigris, it is near the antient Nineveh, which at present is but a heap of undistinguished ruins.

^g This was not the caravan which had been locked up in Bagdat during the siege, as some accounts pretend.

determined the fortune of the day ; so that the Persians retreated towards Leilam, about five leagues from Kerkoud, leaving upon the spot near 4000 ^h men.

We are left a little in the dark, with regard to that engagement which went by the name of the battle of Leilam ; tho' this place, reported to be within five leagues of Kerkoud, must consequently have been twenty or thirty leagues from the plains of Aronia ¹. The Persian general now prepared for a decisive stroke : he had fought the first battle in his own name as general ; the second was in the name of the young king Shah Abas III. Both these being unsuccessful, the army began to be superstitious. Kouli Khan therefore resolved to make his decisive blow in the name of Shah Tæhmas ^k. He chose an advantageous situation to the east, intending to make the attack early the next morning ; and the sun shining in the face of the enemy, he might receive from thence the advantage which the Turks enjoyed four days before, with regard to the wind. At day break, the 26th of October, he advanced at the head of 20,000 of his best troops, and fell upon the van-guard of the Turkish army, which had made some approaches towards him : this attack was so well conducted, that in a short time he pierced through this body of the Turks. The battle then became general on both sides. The Turks began soon to give way, which put their army in some confusion. Topal Osman was not wanting in the duties of a brave and experienced general ; he brought his men up to the charge more than once, but the Persians had the ascendancy, and repulsed them with great slaughter. The Seraskier was fatigued with rallying his people, and perceiving the disorder of his

^h Some make the loss here much greater. It was represented at Constantinople as a second victory, tho' the court was too prudent to rejoice. It seems to me to be little more than a skirmish previous to the fate of the Ottoman army ; however, it is certain, that Kouli Khan's army suffered on this occasion.

ⁱ We may reconcile the different accounts, by supposing it to be between both places, for the plains of Aronia extend near Leilam. The description of battles properly belongs to soldiers, and few of these give us a good account of what passes at our very doors, so that we must suppose a great deal with regard to these remoter scenes more than is related.

^k However extraordinary this may appear, the superstition of the soldiers might render it necessary ; not so much out of love to Shah Tæhmas, as to try their fortune under a name which had been always lucky to Tæhmas Kouli Khan.

his army, put himself at the head of the Janissaries, and disputed the victory with as much bravery, as the importance of the occasion could inspire ; till at length, two musquet-balls pierced his body, and he dropt dead from his horse.

Thus fell the brave Topal Osman, one of the greatest statesmen and generals, and a man of the most integrity, of any in the Ottoman empire. His fall determined the fate of the Turkish army ; those who were near him were disheartened, and no longer fought with the same spirit : most of these fell by the sword, others fled, and the defeat became general. The Persians pursued the vanquished enemy, and made a great slaughter. Kouli Khan immediately sent his Afghans to intercept the flight of the Arabs, who had fought under Topal Osman ; and, in remembrance of their perfidious conduct at the battle of Kerkoud, he caused great numbers of them to be put to the sword.

The Turks lost upon this occasion all their baggage, artillery, with their military chest, and not less than 40,000 men, among whom were many Bashas and persons of distinction. A great number were taken prisoners, among these was the intendant¹ of the army, who informed Tæhmas Kouli Khan of the fate of Topal Osman. Curiosity, as well as veneration for the character of this great man, induced the Persian general to order that the body should be brought to him, he stood some time in silence, and surveyed it with an awful reverence. Topal Osman was indeed the conqueror ; tho' vanquished, he triumphed. Being arrived to the age of seventy, he had finished his course with glory, which it was hardly possible his enemy should ever attain to ; since the principles on which he set out, were diametrically opposite to those of this good man. The Persian general ordered the Body to be sent to Bagdat with proper honour, that the remains of so brave an officer might receive the funeral-rites due to his rank, and the last homage of his countrymen, whose cause he had ever espoused, with a true patriot zeal.

The news of the death of Topal Osman, with the intire defeat of the Ottoman army, astonished the court, and the whole city of Constantinople. The success of Kerkoud in July before, served only to add to their sensibility of this misfortune : and from the opinion which had been entertained of the great loss of the Persians on that occasion, they imagined Kouli Khan to be a devil or enchanter, who could with so rapid a course reverse his fortune.

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¹ Ordou Cadi.

The grand visier, apprehensive of some commotion in the city, caused guards to be placed at certain posts to prevent an insurrection. The divan assembled immediately. The grand signior and the musti recommended a peace with Persia almost at any price, as the war seemed to tend to the ruin of the empire. The visier on the other hand represented the Persians as vincible, of which the battle of Kerkoud was a standing memorial; and that to lose the conquered provinces by the force of arms, would be less inglorious than tamely to yield them up to the Persians.

This opinion being at length agreed to, preparations were made to send cannon and ammunition to Alexandria, also money for the payment of the army; and 8000 Janissaries were commanded to march the 15th of December. Abdalla Kouproli, Bascha of Cairo, was nominated as generalissimo, in the place of Topal Osman; and the several Baschas in the Turkish dominions in Asia, had orders to march with all the forces they could collect.

CHAP. L.

The education, and most remarkable incidents of the life of Topal Osman Bascha; with a particular account of his gratitude and great generosity to his benefactor, who ransomed him in his youth from slavery.

THE mention I have already made of a brave Turk, will sufficiently countenance the following story. It is an anecdote by no means below the dignity of an historian, nor foreign to my subject. The design of it is to instruct us by example, which is confessedly the great use of history: and I am persuaded this relation will give pleasure to every one who does not think gratitude a pious frenzy, or that it is a virtue fit only for little minds, whose weakness betrays them into a passion, which clashes with self-love, so much the idol of mankind.

Topal Osman was educated in the chambers of the seraglio;^m a method which was formerly used only with the children of

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^m There are different chambers of the seraglio through which those children passed, who were formerly sent up from the Christian provinces subjected to the Ottoman empire. They went from the last chamber into the service of the sultan, and were employed in the different offices of the court and ministry. According

the tribute, and who were all of christian parents. In the year 1698, being then about the age of twenty-five, he was sent with the sultan's orders to the Bascha of Cairo. He travelled by land to Said ⁿ, and being afraid of the Arabs who rove about the adjacent countries, plundering passengers and caravans, he embarked on board a Turkish vessel bound to Damietta, a city on the eastermost channel of the Nile. In this short passage they met with a Spanish privateer: their ship was no match for her, but the whole crew resolved to fight, and try to preserve their effects, and defend themselves from slavery; upon which a bloody action ensued. There it was this great man gave the first proofs of that intrepidity, by which he so often signalized himself afterwards. The crew, animated by his example, fought with great bravery; but superior numbers at last prevailed, and Osman was taken prisoner, after being dangerously wounded in his arm and thigh.

When the vessel had surrendered, the instances of bravery which Osman had shewn, induced the Spanish captain to pay him a particular regard, especially when it was known that he was charged with the grand signior's orders, and that consequently a large ransom might be expected for him. Notwithstanding the good treatment he received, his wounds were still in a dangerous way, when he arrived at Malta, whither the privateer went to refit: the wound in his thigh was the most dangerous, and he was lame of it ever afterwards; from which he had the name of Topal or cripple, as already mentioned.

At that time, Vincent Arnaud, a native of Marseilles, was commander of the port of Malta; and, as his business required, went on board the privateer as soon as she came to anchor. Osman no sooner saw Arnaud, than he said to him; "Can you do a generous and gallant action? Ransom me, and take my word you shall loose nothing by it." Such a request from a slave in chains was not common; but the manner in which it was delivered, struck the Frenchman so much,

ing to their conduct or fortune, they rose to the several posts and offices of the empire. The policy of this was, that not knowing their parents and relations, and oftentimes ignorant of the very country they came from, they might be the more absolutely dependent and devoted to the service of the grand signior. But now the Turks have found means to have their own children educated in the seraglio; and the chambers in which those designed for employments are bred, and from which they are taken, do mostly consist of native Turks.

▪ The ancient Sidon in Syria.

much; that he immediately turned to the captain of the privateer, and asked what he demanded for the ransom. He answered, a thousand sequins ^o. Arnaud upon this turning round to the Turk, said: "I know nothing of you, and would you have me risque a thousand sequins on your bare word?" "Each of us act in this," replied the Turk, "with consistency. I am in chains, and therefore try every method to recover my liberty; and you may act right in not trusting to the word of a stranger; I have nothing at present but my word and honour to give you, nor do I pretend to assign any reason why you should trust to it, however, I tell you once more, if you do trust to it, you shall have no occasion to repent." The commander upon this went to make his report to the grand master, Don Perellos. The air with which Osman delivered himself, and the seeming ingenuousness, together with the singularity of the circumstances, wrought such an effect upon Arnaud, that he returned immediately on board the Spanish vessel, and agreed with the captain for six hundred sequins, which he paid as the price of Osman's liberty. After this, he put him on board a vessel of his own, where he provided him with a surgeon, and every thing necessary for his entertainment and cure. In a short time he was out of danger.

Osman had mentioned to his benefactor, that he might write to Constantinople for the money he had advanced; but finding himself in the hands of a man who had trusted so much to his honour, he was emboldened to ask him another favour, which was to leave the payment of the ransom entirely to him. Arnaud distinguished that in such a case things were not to be done by halves; he therefore not only agreed to the proposal, with a good grace, but entrusted him with the ship, in which he had been lodged, and shewed him every other mark of generosity and friendship. Accordingly Osman, as soon as he was in a condition, set out again upon his voyage in this vessel.

The French colours now protected him from the privateers. In a short time he reached Damietta, and sailed up the Nile to Cairo. No sooner was he arrived there, than he delivered a thousand sequins to the master of the vessel, to be paid his benefactor Arnaud, together with some rich furs ^p, and five hundred crowns as a present for himself. He executed the orders of the sultan his master with the Basha of

^o Near 500 l.

^p These are the genteelst presents in the east.

Cairo; and setting out for Constantinople, was himself the first who brought the news of his slavery.

His sense of the favour that had been done to him, and the generous circumstances of it, was not confined to the first emotions of gratitude: during the whole course of his life, he did not cease, by letters and other acknowledgments, to testify the deep impression it had made upon him.

In 1715 war was declared between the Venetians and Turks. The grand visier, who had projected the invasion of the Morea, assembled the Ottoman army, near the isthmus of Corinth, the only pass by which this peninsula can be attacked by land. Topal Osman was charged with the command to force the pass, which he not only executed with great success, but afterwards took the city of Corinth by assault. For this service he was rewarded, by being made a Basha of two tails. The next year he served as lieutenant-general under the grand visier at the siege of Corfu, which the Turks were obliged to abandon. Osman staid three days before the place to secure and conduct the retreat of the Ottoman troops, which he effected with great success.

In 1722 he was appointed Seraskier¹, and had the command of the army in the Morea. When the consuls of the different nations came to pay their respects to him in this quality, he distinguished the French by particular marks of kindness and protection, and gave them a strict charge to write to Malta to Vincent Arnaud, and acquaint him of his new dignity, and to beg of him to send his son, that as it was now in his power, he would charge himself with making his fortune. Accordingly Arnaud's son went into the Morea, and the Seraskier not only made him presents, but granted him privileges and advantages in point of trade, which soon put him in a way of acquiring an estate².

Topal Osman's parts and abilities were such, that from this command he was soon raised to a greater. He was made a Basha of three tails, and Beglerbeg of Romania, one of the greatest governments in the empire, and which the vicinity to the Danubian provinces, and the frontiers of Hungary, renders still more important.

His residence, during his government, was at Nyssa. In the year 1727, Vincent Arnaud and his son waited upon him there, and were received with the utmost tenderness and affection.

¹ General in chief.

² It may be observed in general, that when men of eminent rank in the east mean to do a distinguished service, they are not behind the christians.

section. Laying aside the pomp of the Bascha and governor, he embraced them, caused them to be served with sherbet and perfume, and to sit upon the sofa with himself; an honour but rarely bestowed by a Bascha of the first order, and hardly ever to a christian. After these marks of distinction, he sent them away loaded with presents. As the father and son were taking their leave of him, Arnaud said, he hoped he should live to pay his duty to him, as grand visier, at Constantinople. This, which was then only a compliment, proved prophetic.

I have already given an account of the great revolution of 1730 in Constantinople, in which the grand visier Ibrahim perished. This office was become so perilous, that three had been preferred to it in less than a year's time. In September 1731, Topal Osman was called from his government, to fill a place, which though by far the highest in the Ottoman empire, and perhaps the highest that any subject in the world enjoys, is always dangerous, and was then so in a particular degree. He no sooner arrived at Constantinople to take possession of his new dignity, than he sent for the French ambassador, and desired him to write to Malta, and let his old benefactor know of his advancement; and that he should hasten to Constantinople, while things remained in the present situation; adding, that a grand visier seldom kept long in his station.

In the month of January 1732, Arnaud with his son arrived at Constantinople from Malta, bringing with him variety of presents, and twelve Turks whom he had ransomed from slavery. These, by command of the visier, were ranged in order before him. Vincent Arnaud, now seventy-two years of age, with his son, were brought before Topal Osman, grand visier of the Ottoman empire. He received them in the presence of the great officers of state, with the utmost marks of affection. Then turning to those about him, and pointing to the ransomed Turks, "Behold," says he, "these your brethren now enjoying the sweets of liberty, after having groaned in slavery: this Frenchman is their deliverer. I was myself a slave, loaded with chains, streaming in blood, and covered with wounds: this is the man who redeemed and saved me; this is my master and benefactor: to him I am indebted for life, liberty, fortune, and every thing I enjoy. Without knowing me, he paid for me a large ransom; sent me away upon my bare word, and gave me a ship to carry me where I pleased.

“Where is even a musfulman capable of an action of such generosity?”

While Osman was speaking, every one present had their eyes fixed upon old Arnaud, who held the grand visier's hands closely locked between his own. The visier then asked both father and son many questions concerning their situation and fortune, heard their answers with kindness and attention, and then ended with an Arabick sentence, Allah-Kerim^c. He made before them the distribution of the presents they had brought, the greatest part of which he sent to the sultan, the sultana mother, and the Kislar Aga^t. Upon which the two Frenchmen made their obeisance, and retired.

After this ceremony was over, the son of the grand visier took them to his apartments, where he treated them with great kindness. Some time before they left Constantinople, they had a conference in private with the visier, who divested himself of all state and ceremony. He let them understand, that the nature of his situation would not permit him to do as he desired, since a minister ever appears in the eyes of many to do nothing without a view to his own particular interest; adding, that a Bascha was lord and master in his own province, but that the grand visier at Constantinople had a master greater than himself.

He caused them to be amply paid for the ransom of the Turks, and likewise procured the restitution of a debt, which they had looked on as desperate: he also made them presents in money, and gave them an order, in virtue of which they took a loading of corn at Salonica, which was likely to be very profitable, as the exportation of corn from that port had been for a long time prohibited.

As his gratitude was without bounds, he seemed desirous to convince his benefactor, that his liberality was the same; his behaviour, upon this occasion, must appear great and noble, since every action of his life demonstrates a mind superior to affectation. His conduct appears the more generous, when it is considered, what contempt and aversion the prejudices of education often create in the mind of a Turk against the christians: and if we reflect further, that this confession was made before his whole court, the action will appear in its full lustre.

By the vigilance and steadiness of his ministry, this great man restored government and a regular discipline, with plenty

to

^c The providence of God is great.

^t Chief of the black eunuchs.

to Constantinople, where a licentious confusion had so lately reigned, and where the inhabitants had been in such distress, that the necessaries of life were not to be had but at an excessive price. He has indeed been blamed for his too great severity; but it is certain, that he never condemned to death the most culpable, even of the lowest class of the people, without the decision of the musti. And though his severity should have been extended to what might be deemed an excess, reasons of state, and the security of the general tranquillity of the empire, might make a strict execution of the laws not only expedient, but absolutely necessary. Nor can it be supposed, that a man, whose honour and goodness of heart was so conspicuously displayed, could be cruel. The greatest proof that can be given to clear him of such an imputation, is the universal regret that people of all ranks shewed when he was removed from his office ^u.

He received his orders of dismissal with all the calmness imaginable; for he was too wise to expect that virtue alone could support a man in an office under a distracted government, and where change was adopted as necessary. When he came out of the seraglio, after delivering up the seal of the empire, he found his friends and domestics very pensive and disconsolate. "What is the reason," says he, "of your affliction; have I not always said, that the office of visier is of all others the most likely to be short? All my concern was, how I should get out of it with honour; and thanks to God, I have done nothing with which I reproach myself. My master, the grand signior, approves my services, and I resign with perfect satisfaction." He then gave orders for rendering his thanks to heaven, as if it had been one of the most happy events of his life ^w.

After this, he immediately set out for Trebisonde, where he was appointed Basha. His removal could not be called a disgrace, for the grand signior never ceased to treat him with all possible marks of distinction. His highness acquainted him, that he must leave his son at Constantinople, and that himself would take care of his fortune. About four days after Topal Osman's departure, this young man had the honour of delivering to the sultan, the present ^x which his father

E c 4

ther

^u In March 1732.

^w A rare instance this of virtue. I hope it is strictly true. I am sorry to say it is not more credible of a christian than of a Mahomedan. See Vol. I. Chap. XXX.

^x A horse-furniture set with jewels, value 50,000 crowns.

ther was to have made him on the feast of Bayram ¹. Presents at the Ottoman court, as well as all over the east, are not considered as the effects of generosity and friendship, or marks of respect, but as a tribute which must be paid by inferiors of all ranks to their superiors, especially from certain officers to their sovereign. This present might however have been dispensed with, as the father was out of the office of grand visier; but he gave his son express orders at his departure, not to fail to make it; and by that means, he shewed with what entire satisfaction he had resigned his high employment.

The grand signior received the present, in a manner that convinced him and all the world, that he had not in the least forfeited his esteem. He had been gone but a few days, when orders were sent to him to repair to the frontiers of Persia, and take upon him the command of the Ottoman armies. This was an honourable and important station, but full of danger and difficulty. He filled it with all the abilities of a wise statesman and experienced officer. Though he sunk at last before the fortune of Tæhmas Kouli Khan, yet he fell worthy of himself; worthy of that character he had so deservedly acquired, and maintained through the course of a life, not distinguished so much by his high employments, as that he never deviated from the paths of honour and virtue.

The grand signior preserved such an esteem for his memory, that tho' his son Achmed was but young, he promoted him to the high post of Basna and Beglerbeg of Romania, which his father enjoyed when he was called to the office of grand visier. It gives us the strongest idea of arbitrary power, to consider the policy of the Ottoman government. The same grand signior, who promoted the son to one of the first dignities of the empire, in honour to the father's memory and great services, sent an order to seize all the father's effects ². It may be presumed the state was poor, which in such governments was a sufficient reason. Thus the son succeeded to no great part of the vast riches his father died possessed of.

Topal

¹ This is a high festival among the Turks, at which time it is usual to make presents to one another.

² This is meant of his moveable or personal estate. As to landed estates, it is a custom for persons in the service of the grand signior, to assign them in heritage to the church, in case of the failure of heirs, by which means they cannot be seized by the crown, without a degree of sacrilege.

Topal Osman was one of those few, who through the course of a long life, gave the highest demonstrations of a mind superior to vulgar applause. His greatness was the effect of his virtue, his understanding and intrepidity; but his ambition was to act like a man, who believes there is a God, and a state of rewards and punishments. If this generous Turk said of Vincent Arnaud, "Where is even a musulman who is capable of an action of such generosity?" We may say, "Where shall we find even a christian, re- quiting a generous action in a more noble manner than "Topal Osman?" Instances of this kind among either Christians or Mahommedans, are indeed but rare; and therefore when they happen, ought the more to be recorded.

C H A P. LI.

Tæhmas Kouli Khan acquaints the Russian court of his success. Achmed Bascha prepares to stand another siege. Mahommed Khan Balouche declares for Tæhmas Shah at Shiras; is defeated by Kouli Khan, and hangs himself. The Turks prepare to take the field. Kouli Khan marches into Georgia the beginning of 1734, and takes Teflis. Description of that country. Selim Bascha retires out of Georgia. Kouli Khan takes Ganja and Shamakie.

TÆHMAS Kouli Khan having obtained this memorable victory over the Turks, and given orders for the burial of his dead, dispatched an express to acquaint the Russian empress of the signal advantage he had obtained. This news was not ungrateful to the court of St. Petersburg: the port was divided into factions upon the subjects of a war with Russia; but it was apprehended, if Kouli Khan had not kept them fully employed, they would have soon determined upon it: and preparations were accordingly making in Russia.

It is presumed, that Kouli Khan requested that the empress would not permit the Crim Tartars to pass near her dominions, should they attempt to join the Lesgees, who waited only a favourable occasion of making a powerful diversion in Shirvan and other places, near the coast of the Caspian Sea. The Russians, yet possessed of Derbend, and the conquest they had made on that coast; were not interested to countenance the projects of Kouli Khan, any otherwise than to reduce

reduce the Turks, which was a much greater object than the preservation of that conquest.

So signal an advantage gained over the Turks, within fifty leagues of Bagdat, could not but alarm Achmed Bascha. We have already observed, that this sagacious governor had put his city in a condition of defence, and preserved a kind of independent sovereignty. After the battle of Kerkoud, several detachments of Topal Osman's forces demanded entrance into the city. The Bascha absolutely refused, alledging, that they were sent to protect the city, but not to come into it: that he had a sufficient garrison of his own, and therefore would not admit them. He was now in a better condition of defence than he had been in April before, and had made a larger collection of provision. Besides his own artillery, he was also master of that which the Persians had left behind them. Under these circumstances, tho' he had but ill grounds to expect any relief from the Turkish armies for a considerable time, he determined to make a gallant defence.

Winter was now approaching, and it might be expected that the banks of the Tigris would swell as is usual on that season, so as to render the approaches to Bagdat difficult, if not impracticable. However, Kouli Khan advanced towards the city, to try if he could obtain the submission of Achmed Bascha, for whom he professed a particular friendship, as a man of excellent understanding, and a good foldier. The testimony which he ever gave of the Bascha was, "That he was much a greater man than himself, or the grand signior; because," says he, "Achmed Bascha has supported himself in Bagdat, without giving up the place either to me or his master."

Whilst the Persian general was thus meditating in what manner he should conduct himself, news arrived from Shirafs, that Mahommed Khan Balouche², one of his generals, whom he had sent to raise recruits in that quarter of the empire, had joined Seffie Mahommed Khan, governor of the province: that they in conjunction with each other had collected an army of 30,000 men, and proclaimed Shah Tæhmas as their lawful king. Tæhmas Kouli Khan no sooner received this notice, than he marched back into Persia. He took with him about 30,000 of his best troops, and proceeded with the utmost expedition by the rout of Isfahan towards Shirafs. Those of his men, whose horses failed, or by any accident could not keep pace in his continued forced marches,

² This Khan is distinguished as a native of the country of the Balouches.

marches, he left upon the road ; so that he arrived at Shirafs at a time, when his enemies had hardly received news of his leaving Turkey.

Upon the first report of the advance of the troops of Kouli Khan, Mahommed Khan Balouche, who imagined it was only a small detachment under the command of one of the officers of this general, marched out to attack them. In a short time he fell in with the van-guard of Kouli Khan, consisting of 12,000 men, himself at their head. Mahommed Khan Balouche now expressed great satisfaction, as if fortune had delivered the tyrant-general into his hands. He imagined the greatest part of his forces were not yet come up ; but he soon found his mistake. When Kouli Khan began to give his orders for the attack, the thunder of his voice, which was remarkably strong, struck a panic into Mahommed's men, and they hardly stood the first fire.

Mahommed Khan Balouche had often given proofs of his valour, and was distinguished for many other good qualities. Enraged at the cowardice of his soldiers, he grew desperate ; and, attended by a few followers, singled out Kouli Khan, and rode towards him, to try if the fortune of his lance could reach the heart of a man, whom he knew to be false, an enemy to his lawful sovereign, and a slave to his ambition.

This attempt, if we may judge from the character of the man, was directed more by principles of generosity and national honour, than by envy or ambition. It did not succeed : however, he made his part so good, that he fought his way back again ; and retiring near Bender Delem, he embarked in an Arabian vessel, intending to make his escape. The treacherous Arabs, who navigated the vessel, discovering who he was, in expectation of a reward, brought him to Shirafs, and delivered him to his enemy. Tæhmas Kouli Khan sent him to prison, designing to extort a confession of his accomplices, and also of his riches, which were supposed to be very considerable. Suicide can in no instance be deemed warrantable, otherwise we might call it intrepidity to baffle the designs of such an enemy as Kouli Khan. The unfortunate captive general was no sooner left alone, than he hanged himself.

Tæhmas Kouli Khan having chastised the inhabitants of Shirafs, and put those to death who attempted to restore Shah Tæhmas, he enriched himself with their 1734. sequestered estates, and returned to Isfahan. Here he remained till the next Spring, employing himself in recruiting his army in hopes of finishing the great work in which he had so well

well succeeded the last year, and compelling the Turks to yield up all the conquered provinces.

In the mean while, the Ottoman court made all the preparations possible, to defend themselves against an enemy, whom they had now sufficient reason to believe very formidable. They had made an attempt to engage the Khan of the Crim Tartars in their quarrel, and if these could have been joined with the Lesgees they might make a powerful diversion in Shirvan; but it is hardly practicable to penetrate into Persia through the passes of mount Caucasus, or the country to the north-west of Dagistan.

The Lesgees, however disposed to take all advantages of the Persians, were but ill-inclined to favour the entrance of the Crim Tartars on the north-side of their mountainous residences. The Georgians were as little disposed to receive them into their country; and the Russians least of all. The Cabardinian Tartars, who are subject to Russia, were ordered to appear in arms, if those of the Crim should attempt to force a passage; and as a war was expected to break out with the Russians, the Crim Tartars would by this means be left exposed; so that the Turks had but little reason to expect any succours in the Persian war from those Tartars. The Lesgees, however, appeared in arms, designing to make a diversion in favour of the Turks.

Kouli Khan having recruited his army to near 100,000 fighting men, opened the campaign this year by marching directly to Tavis, from whence he sent his son Nefr Ali, with a body of forces to the banks of the Kura, to drive the Lesgees back again into their mountains. These Tartars made incursions into Shirvan, but finding a numerous body of Persian forces which they did not expect, they retired with great precipitation. He left his son on the banks of the Kura, with orders to march to Ganja, whilst he himself penetrated into Georgia as far as Teflis.

This city is supposed to be the Acropolis of the antients; it is large and well peopled, and the houses built with brick. In the center is an eminence with a citadel, very difficult of access: at the foot of it runs the Kura, which contributes much to its natural strength.

The Georgians are the descendents of the antient Iberians, who inhabited the countries on both sides the Cyrus. The Greeks call them Georgi, from whence we may presume they derived their present name; the oriental nations call this country Guergestan.

The

The bravery of these people is very remarkable; their situation seems to exact it of them. In these latter times we have had several proofs, particularly of those commanded by Gurghin Khan, the governor of Kandahar, as before mentioned. The Vali of Georgia, we have also seen, might, to all human appearance, have saved the Persian monarchy, had he not adhered to a rash vow. These people are as dextrous with the bow and arrow, as with fire-arms; and the Persians were wont to esteem them the best troops in their army. They were now tributary to the Turks, and consequently few if any of them amongst Nadir's forces. That they were always very warlike, appears from antient historians; they neither submitted to the Medes nor Persians, nor even to Alexander the Great: they could not indeed resist the Roman arms; Pompey took their capital Acropolis, and reduced the kingdom of Iberia to a Roman province.

The Khan of Teflis has the title of Vali, and all the other chiefs of the respective provinces are denominated princes. These last are independent of each other, as well as of the Vali; but in case of danger they unite in one common interest. Hemmed in by two powerful nations, they have necessarily paid tribute either to the Turks or Persians for some ages. Their governments are hereditary, and seldom any accidents have happened to divest their families of their respective sovereignties; which are in number about a dozen, who are divided and subdivided. They generally support from 200 to 1000 men each, and two or three of them can bring 6000 into the field. For the support of these soldiers, the peasants pay a tenth of the produce of the land; besides furnishing, in time of war, a certain number of men equipped.

The climate of this country is soft, not very different from that of Italy, and extends from about the latitude of 41 to 44. The capital Teflis is near the center of the lower Georgia; the upper Georgia stretches towards the Black Sea. It is surrounded with mountains almost on every side, and abounds in woods, but there are also very fertile plains. They till their land with buffaloes and oxen; they plow deep, and their crops are abundant. They are christians of the Greek religion, and consequently not forbidden the use of wine, which they have very good, and in great plenty. The men are remarkably tall, comely, robust, and well made, ostentatious,

tatious, and fond of a splendid appearance; the women ^c are celebrated for their beauty over all Asia.

The Georgians have generally been most disposed to submit to the Persians, and in order to support their fidelity, the sovereigns of that monarchy have shewn them great indulgence. Those of their princes, who are disposed to change their religion, have ever met with a kind reception at the Persian court, and been entrusted with some of the first employments in that government. Persia by this means has had a constant resource of troops, whose valour and fidelity might be safely relied on ^d.

The Georgians now saw their sovereign the grand signior oppressed on every side; disheartened by the defeat of Topal Osman, and in no capacity to make head against the victorious armies of Kouli Khan. Teflis having submitted to him, he thought it his interest to treat the people with tenderness. The Turks retired, not being in any condition to oppose him.

Kouli Khan, in the exultation of his heart, declared that he would carry his victorious arms to the Hellespont with a more formidable power than that of Xerxes. All the dominions of the grand signior did indeed tremble at his name. The Turks confessed, that they were never more embarrassed since the establishment of their monarchy. Their treasures were exhausted; and their army of veterans hardly amounted to one third part of that of the Persians. Count Bonneval recommended the European discipline; but the Turks had a superstitious reverence for their antient military customs; neither could they derive any advantage from a change of discipline, but by long practice. They raised about 15000 men in Bosnia, which were ordered to join the Ottoman army near Bagdat, under the command of the Seraskier Abdallah Kouproli, who was esteemed one of the best officers in their service. The court also sent 4000 men to him by the way of Trebifonde; but this reinforcement was very insufficient to stop the progress of the Persians.

In the mean while, Selim Basha being in no condition to oppose the Persians, had retired out of Georgia towards Aleppo, leaving that country, as well as Armenia, a prey to the victorious Kouli Khan; upon which all the Georgian princes,

^c These are often spoken of in Europe under the name of Circassians, though Circassia is much farther to the north-west.

^d I never heard, from any good authority, that Kouli Khan had any number of Georgians in his army, probably esteeming it impolitic to entertain people of so different principles in religion.

ces, who were before tributary to the Ottoman empire, submitted to him. Towards the end of October, he came before Ganja, where the Turks had thrown in a garrison of 5000 men; these maintained themselves so well, that Nefr Ali with his forces had not been able to reduce them: Kouli Khan therefore erected three batteries of ten cannon each, and before the month was expired, this place also submitted at discretion.

From thence he directed his course to Shamakie. The Turks had detached a body of 8000 men, mostly Lesgees, to guard the bridge of boats over the Kura at Javat; but they were soon put to flight. The countenance which this city had given to the Lesgees, had so much offended him, that he resolved to raise it to the ground, and slaughter a great part of the inhabitants. Those who had offended most, being either Lesgees, or closely connected with them, fled into the mountains. After a short warning, he commanded the inhabitants, who escaped the fury of his resentment, to retire to Aghson, on the western side of the mountains*, where they might build a new city; and he then destroyed the place. Shamakie had been for many ages esteemed one of the most flourishing cities in this part of the world, well peopled, and abounding in all the necessaries of life. Its situation was agreeable, and its trade extensive. Here the merchants from Persia and Turkey, Armenia, Georgia and Russia had their rendezvous; so that it was a staple for all the commodities of these countries, together with those of Europe. It was also a place of defence.

These however were not sufficient reasons with the ambitious Kouli Khan to preserve this city. Indeed, it is hard to say, if he made a sacrifice of it to his pride or resentment, more than to reasons of policy. The conquest of the Lesgees was an object he had very much at heart; and experience had proved, that it was an asylum to them of late years; or at least, that it was the seat of rebellion, from whence Shirvan was invaded.

C H A P.

* This place stood in 1746, as described in the account of the tract of the Russian embassy, Vol. I. Chap. LVI. and LVIII.

C H A P. XLII.

The Turks desire a peace. Kouli Khan sends an ambassador to the Russian court. Abdallah Kouprouli gives battle to Kouli Khan in the valley of Arpakavi, and is slain, together with 20,000 Turks. Abdallah Basha retreats to Cars. Cara Achmed appointed Seraskier of the Turkish army. Erivan taken. The Turks declare war against the Russians. Kouli Khan's conduct towards that nation.

THE rapid progress of the Persian arms, made the divan of Constantinople in the highest degree desirous of peace with Persia: but Tæhmas Kouli Khan, ambitious of new triumphs, proudly despised any accommodation, but what was judged to be very injurious to the honour of the grand signior. The inclination of the port was to commence a war with the christian powers; and great magazines were forming in Bosnia, in expectation of a favourable opportunity to enter thro' Valachia into the Ukrain. The Ottoman court was also very jealous of the good understanding between the Russians and the Persians, and apprehended a treaty of alliance, by which the former were to make a diversion in favour of Persia on the side of Asoph; whilst there was not less reason to apprehend, that with such assistance Tæhmas Kouli Khan might carry his arms into Natolia, and make the grand signior tremble on his throne.

1735. What favoured the former opinion, was the arrival, at the beginning of this year, of Hussein Kouli Khan as ambassador from Abas, the infant Shah of Persia, to the court of St. Petersburg; his credential letters were signed with the seal of the general Tæhmas Kouli Khan. This minister informed her imperial majesty, that Tæhmas Shah being a weak prince, whose conduct threatened the ruin of the Persian empire, the khans, and all the great lords of the state, had determined to depose him, and set up his son Abas in his place: that they meant not to do the dethroned prince any harm, but to indulge him in all the pleasures to which he was inclined, without submitting to his pacific disposition, with regard to their common enemy the Turk: that Tæhmas Kouli Khan, whose valour and fortune was equal to that of Alexander, and whose prudence and generosity were unrivalled, was determined to prosecute the war with vigour: that her imperial majesty might be assured he would never lay down his arms, whilst the grand signior was

was in any condition to make war against her ; the Persians being intirely disposed to support a perfect amity with the dominions of her imperial majesty, whose interest they considered in common with their own.

This ambassador was also charged with a commission, to require the delivery of Derbend, Baku, Reshd, and all the places in the provinces of Shirvan and Ghilan, with the other districts situated on the coast of the Caspian Sea, which had been conquered by Peter the Great; also that those Tartars in the mountains of Dagistan^t, who had submitted to the Russian arms, should be again restored to the dominion of Persia.

It was said, that Kouli Khan had in the vanity of his heart declared, that if the Russians did not retire, he would take a broom, and sweep them out. The Russians, apprehensive of a war with the Turks, did not think those countries worth a contest: they had never received any benefit from them, but quite the reverse, for they only proved a grave to their armies. As to the revenues of those provinces since the year 1722, which were also demanded by the ambassador, the Russian ministry alledged, that so far from drawing any advantage from thence, the government had been at a great expence in the support of them.

In consequence of this treaty now made with Tæhmas Kouli Khan, her imperial majesty appointed a general officer to accompany the Persian commissaries, in order to see the evacuation of the countries already mentioned, and to fix the boundaries of the two states; which was accordingly done soon after. The ambassador having received all the honours due to his character, took his leave of the empress the 13th of March; and the court bore the expence of his journey to the frontiers, according to custom. The empress intended to send an ambassador to Isfahan, to compliment the young Shah^g; and from thence to proceed to the army, in order to finish the negotiations with Tæhmas Kouli Khan, which the Persian minister had already begun.

The Turks had not yet recovered the shock occasioned by the defeat of Topal Osman; and the rapid progress of the

VOL. II.

F f

Persian

^f I have already given some account of these people in my first volume, and I have only to observe further, that from this country the Alans in the fifth century are said to have spread themselves like a flood over Europe, extending their conquest as far as Spain.

^g We find afterwards, that the Russian ministers were too sensible of the changes to which Persia was subject, to carry this design into execution.

Persian arms the last year had disheartened the court to an extreme degree, insomuch that they would hardly have opposed the enemy, had there been no other object to preserve than the conquered provinces. At the same time, the good intelligence between the Russians and the Persians, gave great umbrage to the port. The grand signior comforted himself however in hopes of an accommodation with the Persians, and that the loss of Georgia would be repaired by his conquests in christendom; the situation of the European powers at that time seeming to facilitate the success of the Ottoman arms. The Persian army was now increased to 120,000 men, and Kouli Khan absolutely refused to enter into terms of accommodation, unless the Turks would not only yield up all the conquered provinces, but also pay him the charge of the war.

The Ottoman court was continually sending troops, ammunition, and money to Aleppo and Trebifonde, from whence the army under Abdallah Kouproli, Bascha of Cairo, was supplied; this general had also succours from Cairo, but as yet he kept close in his intrenchments in Armenia. The Turks esteeming this as a holy war, were yet in spirits to try the fortune of another campaign. The grand signior therefore gave orders to the Seraskier Kouproli, to give battle to Tæhmas Kouli Khan, as soon as he should find himself sufficiently reinforced.

The Persian general had spent the beginning of this year in reducing Georgia, and was now on his march to Erivan. Designing to bring the Turks to an engagement, he sent a detachment of 15000 men towards their camp. The Seraskier immediately concluded, that this motion could be made with no other design than to reconnoitre his situation; he therefore sent a body of his best cavalry to meet them, and after a short skirmish the Persians retreated in confusion. The Seraskier unwilling to lose so apparent an advantage, dispatched more troops after them, and followed himself at the Head of his army, making forced marches, in hopes to intercept their junction with the main body of the Persians.

On the 10th of June, Tæhmas Kouli Khan appeared with 40,000 men in the valley of Arpakavi, so that the whole force with him did not exceed 55,000. The Seraskier, on the other hand, had an army of 80,000. At the approach of the Turks, the Persian general broke up his camp with a seeming precipitation, and retired towards Erivan. After several forced marches, being arrived at the streight previously designed for the action, he concealed a
body

body of his men in a wood, whilst another strong party was covered in a valley. In this situation he prepared to receive the Turks.

The van of the Turkish army saw themselves at once attacked in flank and rear by the Persians, who came out of the defiles. The action was very bloody, and lasted five hours; the Seraskier had two horses killed under him, and after fighting very bravely, met with the same fate as his predecessor Topal Osman; besides him, fell Demir Basha, and Mustapha Basha, generals of the first rank, the last was a kinsman of the grand signior; they lost also four other Bashes, with 20,000 men, the greatest part of whom were killed, the rest taken prisoners; the Persians likewise made themselves masters of thirty-two pieces of cannon, with the military chest and baggage.

This victory was obtained the cheaper, as the rear of the Turks could not come up, and consequently had no share in the action: these retired as soon as they found their van totally defeated: they were followed however by the Persians for near three leagues; some fled to the neighbouring cities, and others into the mountains. Abdallah Basha carried off 8000 Turks to Cars, a city in the Upper Armenia.

The news of this defeat flung the whole city of Constantinople into the utmost consternation, as they concluded from hence; that not only the conquered countries must submit, but that it would be dangerous to the whole empire to continue the war any longer. Fresh orders were therefore sent to Achmed, Basha of Bagdat, with full powers to negotiate a peace with Tæhmas Kouli Khan. The friendship which the Persian general had professed for this Basha, was a circumstance which served to support the drooping spirits of the Ottoman court; the Basha had also acquired so great a reputation, that his enemies as well as his partizans, often styled him Achmed Padisha². The musti and all the court appeared however with very sorrowful countenances. Cara Achmed, who had been for some time lieutenant to the governor of Bagdat, a good soldier, and well versed in the liberal arts, was now sent to supply the place of the Seraskier Kouproli.

Tæhmas Kouli Khan was no sooner master of the field, than he dispatched an officer to the Russian court, to inform them of his victory. The designs which he had now formed, required a peace with the Turks; but he still promised to do nothing without the consent of the empress of Russia.

² The emperor Achmed.

However, if we may judge from the event, he was desirous of engaging the Russians in a war with the Turks, as the most effectual means of promoting his own schemes.

This second important victory favoured his designs. He immediately laid siege to Erivan the capital of Armenia; the garrison having no expectation of succours, soon demanded to capitulate, and were permitted to retire to Cars; but part of the inhabitants were removed into Khorasan. From thence he sent a strong detachment to Erzeroum^b; and by the end of this year's campaign he recovered all the conquered provinces.

If we consider to what a wretched state Persia had been reduced six years before, when Tæhmas Kouli Khan appeared at the head of her forces, we must impute this rapid success to his military genius and fortune. What a prodigious change was it for a country devoured by rapine, whose subjects were despised abroad, and plunged into miseries at home, to give laws to a powerful monarchy in so short a time! It is natural to think, that in the height of his triumphs, Asia would not have bounded his conquests, had his passion been only for military glory; but every circumstance of his conduct proved that he aspired at more than triumphs; and that his ambition of sovereignty was equal to that of conquest; neither of which could be long supported without vast funds, and these hardly were to be obtained by pursuing the war against the Turks.

Before we enter upon the relation of any new event, we must go back to the situation of the Ottoman court. The defeat of the Seraskier Kouproli was attended with a further change of ministry at Constantinople. Ismael Bascha, the grand visier, who had been the chief adviser to prosecute the war with Persia, was deposed the 12th of July, and though a relation of the grand signior, was banished to the isle of Candia: Mahommed Bascha succeeded him; the last was also appointed Seraskier of the army intended to be sent against the Russians. This minister accordingly marched out of Constantinople in great pomp and ceremony, with the standard of Mahommed carried before him. The Russians, who naturally expected this event, were very vigilant in marching an army early into the field; insomuch, that Asoph was besieged before the Turks had taken care to provide a sufficient garrison. This place being at the mouth of the river Don on the Palus Mæotis, and communicating with the
Black

^b At Erzeroum the peace was concluded by the Persian and Turkish ministers.

Black Sea, the laying siege to it created great alarms at Constantinople.

The ministers of the several christian potentates interposed their mediation, to prevent the great effusion of blood, which the Russian war must necessarily occasion; but the Turks were inexorably bent to pursue it. Kouli Khan pretended to make it an article in the peace he was negotiating with the Turks to include the Russians. This was a ministerial stroke, which answered a double purpose. He knew the Turks were intirely averse to it, and consequently their refusal gave him the better plea to make his own terms; and, at the same time, he secretly wished to involve his new friend, as well as his old one, in a war that should keep them well employed for some time, whilst he pursued the favourite projects which he had planned: for this purpose, it was also necessary to start all the difficulties imaginable, in order to protract the issue of the conferences at Erzeroum. Abdil Baki Khan, the Persian ambassador, met Achmed, Basha of Bagdat, but nothing could be concluded this year. The Turks made no difficulty to yield up or restore all the countries conquered from Persia since the time of Shah Hussein, with those which had been separated from that empire during that reign; but Kouli Khan, not satisfied with this, made pretensions on Bagdat, and demanded to be paid the expences of the war.

The issue however made it appear, that it was not his intentions to exact such rigorous conditions, but to gain time, and dispose of the governments of all the conquered countries in a satisfactory manner, and to endeavour to persuade the Russian court, that he meant to prosecute the war, notwithstanding the treaty already commenced.

P A R T XII.

FROM THE

Electing of TÆHMAS KOULI
KHAN King of PERSIA,
in 1736,

TILL HIS

Return from his memorable Expedition into
INDIA in 1740.

C H A P. LIII.

The young Shah Abas dies. The Russians evacuate Derbend, and yield up their conquests in Persia. Tæhmas Kouli Khan declared king. Conditions of accepting the diadem. The Mulla Bashî put to death. Nadir coins money, and seizes the lands of the Church. Edict concerning the sect of the Sunnis and Schias.

1736. **T**HE beginning of this year ripened the plot. Persia, trembling at the effects of her own conquests, saw herself in the hands of an usurper, whose military abilities rendered him the idol of his army. The young prince Abas, who was of a complexion extremely delicate, died. Whether his death was intirely according to the course of nature, is not declared: it is probable, however precarious the life of this infant-king might have been, that some art was used, in order, that so feeble an impediment should not obstruct the designs of Tæhmas Kouli Khan.

The 10th of March, as I have more than once observed, is the Persians new-year's-day, when it is the custom of their princes to assemble the governors of the provinces, and demand an account of their administration. This was a favourable

able occasion to convoke all the governors, elders, and great officers, together with the generals of his army, in order to communicate the success of his arms, and to consult what further measures were necessary to be taken for the common good. The rendezvous was appointed in the plains of Morgan, near the banks of the Aras, where he had assembled the greatest part of his forces, consisting of near 100,000 men. He acquainted the nobles and governors, that the reason of calling them together was, that they might know from him how God had been pleased to bless his arms with success, and to restore all the dominions which had been torn from the late family of the Seffies. That he had delivered Persia from the yoke of the Afghans, and was in treaty with the Turks, with whom he hoped soon to make such a peace as would be agreeable, since the grand signior must be obliged to accept of the conditions which he should prescribe: that he had also concluded a peace with the Russians, who had restored all those dominions belonging to the Persian empire, which they had conquered fourteen years before: in short, that he had left nothing to be done except the conquest of Kandahar. But as it was necessary for the support and continuation of the glory of the monarchy, that they should have a person at the head of their armies, who might prevent such fatal consequences as they experienced in the preceding reign, and as it was his intention to enjoy the remainder of his life in repose, he desired to resign his office; for which reason they must make choice of a new general. Moreover, as it had pleased God to deprive them of the young Abas, they must elect a king also: if they thought Shah Tæhmas could govern them with valour and wisdom, that they had only to recall him; but if he was not capable, they must fix their choice upon some other: that so important a business required mature consideration; he therefore recommended it to them, and desired their answer in the three days.

There was hardly a sensible man in the assembly, but saw through the thin disguise of these propositions; and many saw it with indignation, who had not virtue enough to declare their real sentiments. Kouli Khan retired to his tent, and left the deputies to their own contemplations: he ordered that they should be entertained at the public expence, and treated with all the respect imaginable. It is reasonable to presume, that he had already made his sentiments known to the principal officers, whilst it was obvious to every common soldier, that military glory, and a despotic authority, were his ruling passions. The great care and tenderness which he had upon

all occasions shewn them, necessarily engaged their wishes to see him their sovereign, as well as their general. Under these circumstances, what voice could the deputies of the people have, but such as was agreeable to the army?

The three days being expired, the deputies waited on the general with a petition, representing, "That as God had been pleased to make use of his arm to restore the glory of the Persian monarchy, none was so worthy of the diadem as himself; that their lives and fortunes were reckoned as his, and to him therefore they ought to be devoted."

Tæhmas Kouli Khan then replied: "It is true, that since I led the people to battle, divine Providence has been pleased to favour my designs. You have yourselves been witnesses of the amazing success of the Persian arms. It was not my intention however in calling you together, to receive this mark of your gratitude; but since heaven has decreed that my feeble arm should be the instrument of that almighty power which governs all things, I will consent to your proposal, under certain conditions. It will rest on yourselves to support your own choice, and assist me to exalt the nation to as high a pitch of glory as the greatest kings of the former ages have done. But if you will make me your king, you must remember to comply with the conditions which I now require. First, You must make the diadem hereditary in my family. Secondly, You shall not entertain in your houses any of the family of your old kings, much less mention any thing tending to rebellion. And lastly, You shall not curse Omar, Osman, and Abubeker, nor observe the tumultuous meetings at the commemoration of Hussein's death; and as a great effusion of blood has been occasioned by the religious differences of the sects of the Schias and Sunnis¹, which, in my opinion, are not in themselves essential, an assembly of the priests shall be called to regulate these differences."

It may, I think, be presumed, that Nadir Shah, for that is the name by which we must now call him, elate with his great victories over the Turks, had flattered himself that he might one day unite the Persian and Ottoman dominions under the

¹ See Vol. I. Chap. LI. also Vol. II. Chap. XVII. To this we may add, that as the Sunnis, who are the sect of the Turks, acknowledge the khoran as expounded by the doctors, Malek, Shafi, Handbal, and Abul Hanifa; so the Persians or Schias adhere to Ali, and are guided by their own Imams, who have expounded their ecclesiastical law.

the same head ; but though this dazzling object floated in his imagination, he could scarcely hope to make a speedy conquest of the minds of the people, or that he could reign over both nations, whilst they remained of different sects. It is true he was bred a Sunni, and from thence might seem somewhat inclined that way ; though, in reality, the tenets of both parties were equally indifferent to him.

The Khans and deputies of all the provinces came readily into the two first articles, which seemed more particularly to regard their allegiance to their new sovereign. As to the commemoration of the death of Hussein, the son of Ali, we have already explained, that this festival ^k regarded the ecclesiastical government ; but since it might be made an occasion of tumultuous assemblies, Nadir wisely guarded against it, as injurious to his interest. In regard to the last article, they desired the high priest ^l might be heard ; he was accordingly brought into the presence of the new sovereign, where he spoke to this effect : “ It is not for earthly princes to direct
“ in what manner the God of heaven and earth ought to be
“ worshipped : we have our law, as delivered down by divine authority, through the mediation of the prophet ^m ;
“ that is our guide ; and as all changes in religious matters
“ are subject to very dangerous consequences, I hope no
“ means will be taken to sully the lustre of your victories,
“ by a step so derogatory to the welfare of the true believers.” Such a speech as this, might have easily fired the hearts of a people naturally inclined to enthusiasm ; but perhaps this honest priest was the only man who dared to speak his mind ; the only one, at least, of any eminent authority, who had courage to check that imperious spirit, which already shewed itself in Nadir, though he had not yet received the ensigns of royalty : but as if heaven had marked him out for deliverance from the cruel bondage of Nadir’s government, he was soon silenced with a bow-string. This well-meaning priest might, however, have checked his zeal ; for as the matter was to be referred to priests of the different sects, the consequence was very natural, that it would remain as they found it : nor did the people give their tacit consent to these proposals, so as to produce any particular effect, with regard to the uniformity of religion.

The next day, being the 11th of March, the general was proclaimed king, under the name of Nadir Shah ⁿ, and the people

^k See Vol. II. Chap. XVI. ^l Mulla Bashi. ^m Mahommed.

ⁿ The Persians generally put the title after the name, tho’ Europeans use it before and after indifferently.

people paid him homage as such, which he accepted with an air of dignity mixed with arrogance. The Armenian patriarch, who was in the camp, performed part of the ceremony, by buckling on his sabre; but as to the plume^o and diadem, which, as already observed, is the more essential mark of royalty, he changed it himself from the left-side to his right, as if he meant to shew, that to his own arm only he was indebted for his exaltation.

Thus did the aspiring genius of this instrument of divine wrath accomplish his end: thus did he reach that point which Cæsar could not attain; tho' in valour, generosity, and strength of mind, this celebrated Roman was not inferior to the Persian usurper; whilst he excelled him in learning, politeness, and humanity, to which Nadir indeed had no pretensions. Cromwell also was baffled in his aim at the crown of England; neither his skill nor cunning, nor his valour nor resolution, could acquire him the name of king. Rome, tho' corrupt to an extreme, and ripe for a change of that form of government, by which her people had arrived at so high a pitch of glory, had yet some honest and gallant spirits, who thought the killing of a tyrant warrantable, at least not so great an evil as slavery. In England, there were numbers whose principles were untainted, and who saw the error which had been committed, in attempting to change the monarchy into a republican government: but in Persia, ignorance and want of foresight, with universal corruption of manners, prepared the necks of the people for the yoke to which they now submitted; and it was but a few years after, that they saw pyramids of human heads erected on that spot, where they chose their king^p.

Nadir being arrived at the summit of his ambition, began to exert that boundless authority with which he was invested; however, he tempered his natural fierceness and cruelty with some tokens of munificence: he entertained all the deputies of the people for three days, and treated them with great civility; among other shews and amusements in the camp, was that of shooting an arrow at a gold plate, which was fixed on a lofty pole; those who shot down the mark were to receive it as a reward of their skill, together with a coat of honour.

The

^o These are of the feathers of black herons stuck into a tube, supported by a stud of precious stones.

^p See Vol. I. Chap. LI.

The motto, which he chose upon this occasion for his seal, was this :

“ As the jewel was fallen out of the ring of fame and glory, so God has restored it in the name of Nadir.”

The coins which he caused to be struck had these inscriptions :

“ Nadir king of kings, and glory of the age.”

Another was :

“ Coins proclaim through the earth, the reign of Nadir, the king who conquers the world.”

The assembly were at length dismissed, to appearance very well satisfied ; the priests only resented the death of their chief, the Mullah Bashi, and the little regard which the new sovereign shewed to the national religious tenets ; however, as he did nothing by halves, he was determined to pull off the mask. As soon as he arrived at Casbin, whither he next directed his march, he convoked all the ecclesiastics of the city and neighbouring countries, and demanded of them in what manner the revenues of the church were employed ; they answered, in the support of priests, colleges and mosques, in the last of which incessant prayers were offered to heaven for the success of the arms of their sovereigns : to which he replied to this effect : “ It is certain that you have been very remiss in your duty, and that the Almighty is not pleased with the prayers of such men as you are. It is now near fifty years since the empire has been on the decline, and was at length plunged into the deepest misery, till the victorious instruments ⁹ of the most wonderful, by exposing their lives for its defence and glory, have at length restored it. These are the priests to whose services we are indebted ; therefore the revenues and lands of the church shall be appropriated to their support ¹. ”

It is easy to imagine, what impressions the priests would receive from being plundered of all their revenues ; but as much the greatest part of the army, particularly all the Tartars, were of the sect of the Sunnis, they treated their complaints with derision ; whilst the people in general, apprehending that they should be relieved from their taxes, in proportion as the church revenues were applied to the support of the army, felt no great reluctance in submitting. Religion, indeed,

⁹ His army.

¹ What these revenues amounted to, my authorities do not tell me. If it was one million sterling, it bears one fifth proportion to the whole revenue, according to the calculation in Vol. I. Chap. LXV.

indeed, seemed to be almost at the same low ebb as morality, or they never would have chosen Nadir Kouli for their king. He left the people however at their liberty, with regard to the support of priests at their own expence, but continued to exact a conformity to the Sunnis, agreeably to what he had mentioned in the plains of Mogan; and for this purpose he published the following edict:

The decree to unite the two sects of the Schias and the Sunnis, which divide the Persians and the Turks.

“ All in high stations, the Sedr^f of great power, the
 “ governor, ministers of the law, and learned men of the
 “ royal residence of Isfahan, being exalted through the
 “ king’s favour, shall Know, that while the abode of our
 “ ensigns, on which victory attends, was at Mogan^t, it
 “ was agreed, that according to the antient custom trans-
 “ mitted down to us by our predecessors in the religion, as
 “ explained by Hanifa^u and Jaffer^w, from henceforth we
 “ do acknowledge the directing Caliphs^x, in whom the most
 “ high is well pleased, as the successors of the chief of mes-
 “ sengers^y; and that, whenever there is occasion for it, the
 “ people shall mention the names of the four with great re-
 “ spect.

“ But, whereas, in some places of these kingdoms, at
 “ the time of calling to prayers, and standing up to pray,
 “ the people mention these words, Ali, the friend of God^z,
 “ according to the usual practice of the Schias^a, but con-
 “ trary to those who are of orthodox faith. This we de-
 “ clare to be repugnant to the true religion, and contrary to
 “ the agreement and covenant entered into. Besides, it is
 “ apparent to the world, that as the prince of the faithful,
 “ the

^f The Sedr is a person of authority in the empire, who has the management of church lands, and of the revenues, for the maintenance of public schools, salaries to learned men, and other pious uses.

^t The plains where he was chosen king.

^u Hanifa, one of the four Turkish doctors, famous for expounding the Mahommedan law.

^w Jaffer, one of the Imams or prophets, whose opinion the Sunnis pay the greatest regard to.

^x Abubeker, Omar, Osman, and Ali.

^y Mahommed.

^z Is always annexed by the Schias to the Kelmah, viz. there is but one God, Mahommed is his prophet, and Ali his friend.

^a The sect of the Persians.

“ the lion of God, the victorious ^b, is elect, praised, and
 “ acceptable to the Lord of glory ; his rank and interest at
 “ the court of unity, will not be increased by vulgar testi-
 “ mony, nor the full moon of his power diminished by the
 “ omission of these words. But the ill consequence of this
 “ form is, that both sects ^c, who equally acknowledge the
 “ chief and prophet ^d of both worlds, are provoked to ani-
 “ mosities, which are offensive to the prophet, and to the
 “ prince of the faithful ^e. Therefore, as soon as this high
 “ edict is promulged, let all mussulmen, high and low, the
 “ callers to prayer in the cities, their dependencies, and
 “ adjacent countries, Know, that from this day henceforth,
 “ these words ^f, which differ from the orthodox custom,
 “ shall not be mentioned. It is also usual with governors in
 “ their assemblies, after their prefatory prayer ^g, to say,
 “ may the king, from whom all our fortune flows, live for
 “ ever. As a prayer for perpetuating a mortal man is vain,
 “ and of no effect, we command that every Khan ^h, who is
 “ master of a drum ^k and ensign, say it in this manner,
 “ thanks to the true king for all benefits. From hencefor-
 “ ward let all persons observe these settled regulations and
 “ written orders : for, whosoever deviates from them, will
 “ incur the displeasure of the king of kings. Written in
 “ the month Safer, 1149^l.”

Whatever policy might induce Nadir to make a difference in the form of prayer, it seems to have betrayed him into an absurdity. He might apprehend his interest to be concerned in being acknowledged the “ true king ;” yet his observation on perpetuating a mortal man, seems to be more vain, than the thing itself, which he calls so ; since “ living for ever,” can only allude to immortality after death ; or, according to the eastern manner, the longest period of life.

C H A P.

^b Mortifa, Ali's titles.

^c The Sunnis and Schias.

^d Mahommed.

^e Mortifa Ali.

^f Ali, the friend of God.

^g Fattaha and Tokbir, is a prefatory prayer, which is generally the first chapter of the khoran. Tokbir is repeating three times, these words, Allah, Akbah, God is greatest, before the Kelmah above-mentioned.

^h I presume that the order extended to all persons to use this form.

^k Tabal, or small drum, which general officers ordinarily wear fixed to their saddles.

^l June, 1736.

C H A P. LIV.

Nadir Shah marches to Casbin, and sends an ambassador to Turkey. The grand signior's orders to Achmed Basha concerning peace. All the conquered provinces yielded up to Persia. Nadir Shah marches to Isfahan. Great preparations for an expedition against Kandahar.

THOUGH it was impossible this edict could meet with universal approbation, we do not find that any remonstrances were made against it. However, it was a very politic step upon the whole, as it was not only contrived to avoid expensive and bloody wars with the Turks, but also calculated to continue the diadem in his own family, who were well known to be Sunnis; and according to the former constitution of the empire, would otherwise find it as difficult to establish a lineal succession, as a roman-catholic prince in a protestant country.

Nadir, during his stay at Casbin, took the usual oath, “ To govern the people according to the laws of God, as revealed by his prophet Mahommed; and to protect and defend the Persians against all their enemies.” From hence he dispatched a minister to the Ottoman court, to acquaint them of his accession to the throne; he also ordered another to the court of St. Petersburg for the same purpose. The empress of Russia in return, ordered her resident in Persia to present her congratulations; and presuming that he had already made peace with the Turks, she demanded what the conditions of it were, that she might see if there was any thing contrary to the treaty which she had lately concluded with the Persian empire. Nadir still persisted, that he would enter into no accommodations with the Turks injurious to the interest of her imperial majesty: that if his ministers had done any thing, it was without his orders; though, at the same time, the ambassador appointed for Turkey was one of his prime counsellors and favourites.

On the other hand, the Turkish ministry endeavoured to persuade the people, that in consideration of their yielding up all the conquered provinces, the Persians would make a diversion in their favour against the Russians, who, during this interval, had made themselves masters of Azoph. The grand signior, who feared Nadir when he was only general of the forces of Persia, was the more desirous of cultivating a good understanding with him, now that he was exalted to the throne of that empire.

It was already expected, that Nadir would turn his arms towards India : but in the present situation of his affairs, it was by no means convenient to give either the Russians or the Turks any cause to believe, that he meditated an enterprize against a country at so great a distance. The former had reason to complain of his conduct, in regard to his treaty with the Turks ; whilst these were compelled only by the necessity of their affairs, to submit to terms which they thought highly injurious to their honour and interest. Hence he judged it necessary to practise all his arts to prevent those resentments, which might have obstructed his favourite design.

The grand signior no sooner received notice of Nadir's being advanced to the throne of Persia, than he repeated his orders to Achmed, Basha of Bagdat, to conclude the treaty at Erzeroum : on his part he sent Ghentch Ali Basha to that city ; and the Shah appointed Abdul Baki Khan as his ambassador to Constantinople. The orders which Achmed Basha received from the Ottoman court were couched in the following terms :

“ The most honoured and respectful minister of the empire, most renowned, wise, and trusty counsellor, the most happy Achmed Basha, our Seraskier and Visier in Asia, whose fame and felicity is everlasting, shall know, That certain differences have happened between our sublime and exalted court, and the kingdom of Persia, which have been the cause of immense losses and sufferings to the inhabitants of the frontiers, insomuch, that many districts are intirely ruined. As we are moved with the most tender compassion, and desirous to establish a lasting tranquillity, we have resolved to make these reciprocal losses the occasion of a strict friendship ; thus to obey the orders of providence, and preserve the people from misery.

“ We have already informed you of our design to enter into a convention with his renowned majesty the Shah, who shines as Saturn, and whose vows are heard by the Almighty. The treaty made by our predecessor Amurath the IVth. is proposed as the foundation of this convention. We have learnt from your letters, that the most famous and happy Shah is disposed to reform the errors of the religion of Persia, and has agreed that several articles concerning the faith shall be inserted in the treaty. As the two courts have proposed to conclude this covenant, the illustrious Abdul Baki Khan, on the part of the Shah, is invested with the character of ambassador for this purpose, We agree to the three following articles :

“ I, That

- “ I. That hence forward the Persians shall be at liberty
 “ to visit the tomb of Mecca, and other religious
 “ places, without impediment, and shall be free of all
 “ duties whatsoever: and in order that every article
 “ shall be exactly observed, a plenipotentiary on our
 “ part shall always reside at the splendid court of Isfa-
 “ han; and one on the behalf of the Shah shall remain
 “ at our court.
- “ II. That the Shah, as a pure effect of the greatness of
 “ his soul, will cause the differences in religion to cease,
 “ by abolishing the sect of the Schias, and for the fu-
 “ ture tolerating only the Sunnis, who acknowledge
 “ the four successors of Mahommed, Abubeker, Omar,
 “ Osman, and Ali, to the end that there may not be
 “ any farther disputes about religion.
- “ III. After the Shah shall have re-established good or-
 “ der in his dominions, and extirpated the Schias, from
 “ whence arose eternal disorders and disputes concern-
 “ ing the public exercise of religion, and shall have
 “ acknowledged us, the successor of Mahommed, we
 “ shall on our part acknowledge him as Shah.
- “ And notwithstanding that we have already given you
 “ this full power, we authorize you again happily to con-
 “ clude the treaty with the ambassador Abdul Baki Khan, in
 “ the place which you shall chuse to make the exchange;
 “ and afterwards you are to send the treaty to our splendid
 “ court by the visier Korman Waley, who will conduct the
 “ ambassador Abdul Baki Khan, with all his attendants.
 “ For this purpose we have dispatched Capidusi Basba to
 “ conduct him hither, and defray his expences on the road.
 “ When you shall have received the present, and com-
 “ prehend the contents of this commission; above all exert
 “ yourself to establish a good understanding between the two
 “ courts. The prayers of the faithful will aid you in attain-
 “ ing the extirpation of the sect of the Schias, and to ex-
 “ clude from the treaty the unbelieving Russians. By this
 “ means you may expect the exalted favour of your majes-
 “ ty, and the acknowledgment of all true believers. These
 “ are our orders, by which you are to regulate yourself.
 “ Given the 8th of the month Zilchildefi, 1148^m. I,
 “ Cafi Asker Mahommed, a servant of the true God, do
 “ attest that this copy is according to the original of the
 “ sultan.”

The

April 1736.

The conferences at Erzeroum still continued, and tho' the Turks submitted to every thing which the Shah seemed inclined to insist upon, yet nothing was finally determined; and Abdul Baki Khan was ordered to proceed to Constantinople, where he continued to practise the arts of evasion, no doubt by the instruction of his master. The Ottoman court was extremely offended at this conduct; but as peace was absolutely necessary, near the close of the year the treaty was concluded. Nadir was acknowledged as sovereign of Persia; all the conquered provinces were yielded back to that empire; and a full permission was granted for the Persians to visit the tomb of Mahommed. The last article was however of very little moment, since the true policy of the Persian state was to prevent their subjects from making that pilgrimage.

In the mean while, Nadir marched with his army from Casbin to Isfahan, with a view to settle the interior government of the empire. This was not the place which he desired most to favour; however, its situation with regard to the Turks and Russians, and some affectation of popularity, with respect to the antient metropolis of the empire, drew his attention. His natural inclination to avarice, turned his thoughts to the encouragement of commerce; in which, however, he had not the least skill, nor patience to see things brought to maturity. The interest of the Armenians began to revive; the distinction of christian and Mahomedan was weakened, not only as a consequence of the confusion which had long reigned in Persia, but also as an effect of blending the two sects of the Sunnis and Schias. A careless indulgence, as well as a fierce persecution, seem equally destructive of true religion. Moral duties, and mutual confidences, are the natural effects of religion, and as essential to the encouragement of commerce, as to the support of a state in general. What prospect then had the Persians of a happy reign, under a man whose whole life had been guided by principles diametrically opposite to these duties?

The insatiable avarice of the eunuchs and ministers of the weak and unfortunate Hussein, had suffered many of the public buildings in Isfahan to fall to decay, and private houses were in no better condition^a; the Afghans had not repaired them, nor was Nadir inclined to recommend any expence of that nature. The same passion of covetousness possessed his breast, as it had done those of the eunuchs in the former

reign, though the objects they pursued were very different. However, he caused the walls to be repaired, and put the city in a better state of defence. He also made a distribution of several lands, in order to their cultivation, reserving to himself a considerable part of their produce. To those whom poverty had reduced to the lowest ebb, he caused grain to be given, also such small sums as were necessary to provide the utensils of husbandry. Thus he consulted, in some measure, what was essential to the support of the state; but at the same time, the chief object of his care was the maintenance of his army.

Though the late campaign had been attended with such great success, yet the common accidents of war had lessened the number of his forces; for which reason, he sent into all parts for recruits: this distressed the inhabitants in a double respect, as those fit to bear arms were the most proper for husbandry; and the more his army was augmented, the greater necessity he was under for a large supply of money. Agriculture, manufactures, and commerce in general, had been declining very fast some years before the fatal invasion of the Afghans; during their reign, the state was plunged still deeper in misery; and, since their expulsion, scarce any thing had been heard but the din of war. There is something amazingly productive of satisfaction in the notion of conquest: every subject in a military government, is apt to raise himself in his own esteem, in proportion to the achievements and victories of his sovereign; tho' such victories may be the very occasion of their misery. Nadir had indeed made a rapid progress in his conquest; but this served only to delude the people with an imaginary felicity, no longer durable than the first transport of a tumultuous joy.

The sums which Nadir wanted for the prosecution of his designs were very considerable, and could not be collected without the utmost severity. He therefore sent his officers^o to all the cities and provinces in the empire, where money, provisions, horses, arms, or any of the implements of war could be procured; charging them to execute their commissions with the utmost dispatch, as the close of the year was appointed for his intended expedition.

It is reasonable to presume, that he had projected the conquest of the Moghol's empire. What encouragement he had to expect success, we shall have occasion to relate. In the height of his victories over the Turks, he would
scarce

^o Muhassils, or collectors of taxes, and other such kind of duty.

scarce have directed his arms a different way, without good assurance that this enterprize was practicable. He made, indeed, no other profession than that of subduing the Afghans of Kandahar; an undertaking by no means below his character as a great captain. Persia was delivered from the yoke of those people, but not revenged. Their invasion was considered as a rebellion, and as such ought to be chastised; nor were these people in themselves a contemptible enemy, either with regard to their numbers, their situation, or their bravery. Hussein Khan, the brother of Maghmud, who enjoyed the sovereignty of Kandahar, had refused to come into Persia at the summons which Nadir sent to him; and as he had put himself in a condition of defence, it was very plain he meant to support the independency of the Afghans.

After the conclusion of the peace with the Turks, Nadir sent another ambassador to the grand signior, with several magnificent presents, among which was an elephant of a very extraordinary size. Having therefore nothing to apprehend from any of his neighbours; the end of this year he prepared to set out on his eastern expedition.

C H A P. LIII.

A succinct account of the incursion of the Maharrattas, and the enmity between Nizam al Muluck, governor of Deccan, and Devran Khan, the first minister of Mahommed Shah, emperor of Hindostan, with the general state of his court from 1720 to 1736, preparatory to the expedition of Nadir Shah into India.

BEFORE we enter upon a relation of the famous march of Nadir Shah into India, it may be proper to give a short account of the situation of affairs at that time in the Moghol's empire.

In 1720, Sultan Ibrahim having rebelled against Mahommed Shah, his general Abdallah Khan took occasion to pillage the rich throne of the Moghol^P of its diamonds, and raised a great army. This general was soon defeated, and taken prisoner^Q; the young sultan was confined, and the

G g 2

govern-

^P This throne was made by Shah Jehan, and reported to have cost eleven millions sterling.

^Q This general died some months afterwards of his wounds, and it is remarkable that forty-five women of his wives, concubines,

government seemed to be again established. Some time after, Nizam al Muluck ^r, governor of Deccan ^r, grown too powerful for a subject, could not be contained within the bounds of duty, but appropriated the revenues of his province towards the maintenance of an army, which he employed in subjecting the adjacent countries.

He pretended to keep the Maharrattas ^r from making inroads into the dominions of the Moghol. These people had imposed a heavy tribute on their neighbours, and taken possession of several places of consequence. They made incursions as far as the province of Malva, killed the governor, and seized all his treasures. From thence they directed their course to Guzurat, the inhabitants of which they treated as a conquered people; after which they returned eastward as far as Gualiar, laying the country under contribution: the peasants implored the protection of the emperor, and the whole court was under great alarms.

The Great Moghol therefore ordered an army to be provided; and Devran Khan ^u, his first minister and also his visier with several other Omras ^w, were appointed to command it. Instead of giving battle to the Maharrattas, whose
numbers

cubines, relations, and domestics, burnt themselves in one room, the day after his death. Formerly, none but the wives of the Brahmins or Indian priests had this barbarous privilege; but since the government has devolved upon the Rajas, it has been often practised for some of the wives of princes and others to burn themselves when their husbands die. Some of these princes are independent of the Moghol, and govern distinct tribes, called Raijpouts, who are esteemed the best soldiers in India. This custom of burning is strictly forbid by the Mahommedan, which is the established religion; but some of the Seyd and Pattan families, through the mere force of pride fall into this custom; and, to evade the laws, set their apartments on flames, and thus destroy themselves. There is no compulsion to this sacrifice in any part of India; but the minds of the people are so strongly tainted with an opinion of its being honourable to the surviving relations of a party, that money has been often given to obtain the consent of a governor for the liberty of destroying themselves.

^r This word signifies him who puts the empire in order.

^r It is sometimes wrote Dekien.

^r These people are sometimes called Ganims; they inhabit the hither India.

^u He was the paymaster-general of the empire, whom they call Bukhshi.

^w Omra is the plural of Emir, signifying prince or great, a title given to persons of the first rank in India, as already explained; this word is also wrote Umeras.

numbers were much inferior to the emperor's troops, they made a composition to pay a fourth part * of the revenues of Dehlie, on condition that they would retire, and lay down their arms. These lords then returned home in pursuit of their pleasures. The whole court was devoted to amusement, and appeared in some measure in the circumstances in which that of Shah Husein had lately been, in Persia.

The pusillanimous conduct of these generals, was the occasion that Bajerau, at the head of his Maharrattas, took up arms again the next year, notwithstanding the contribution agreed for had been punctually paid. They plundered many places, and intended to march as far as Akbar Abad †. Upon this, Devran Khan and the visier marched against them a second time, and got up with them a little after they passed the river Jumna, intending to penetrate the province ‡ of Saadit Khan. But this general having notice of their design, marched against them with great force, and defeated them: Devran Khan and the visier having joined Saadit Khan, pursued the Maharrattas, who were intercepted by a strong body of Moghols, and put to flight. The offence which Saadit Khan took at the compromise made by Devran Khan with these free-booters, together with the great opinion he had conceived of his own merit, were the chief occasion of his retiring to his province discontented.

In the mean time, Mahommed Shah was not ignorant that Nizam al Muluck was the real author of these disorders; which it would hardly be possible to prevent, unless he returned to court. The emperor therefore sent him an invitation under the strongest assurances, not only of security to his person, but also that nothing should be wanting to give him pleasure. This man was the most distinguished for his abilities of any of the Indian lords: their cabals were the chief occasion of plunging the state into difficulties: he had often recommended the administration of justice as practised in the reigns of the former emperors, particularly that of his old master Auringzebe †; but the unhappy situation of the

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court

* This they call Chot, a tribute which has been often attempted to be imposed on the more peaceable Indians.

† Agra, this was formerly the capital.

‡ Mr. Frazer and Mr. Otter mention this as the province of Audih, which the former places beyond Penjab; this must be a mistake, or the Maharrattas must have travelled over a vast tract of country.

† This prince died in 1707, after a happy reign of fifty lunar years.

court rendered his advice ineffectual, so that he retired to his government very much disgusted. He was irritated against Devran Khan and other Omras, who had acquired an ascendancy over the emperor, and crossed all the measures which he had proposed, whilst he saw the court abandoned to buffoons and loose women.

Nizam al Muluck having been solicited to return to court, at length resolved to comply: but he left his son Ghazi O'din Khan to command in his province. He did not acknowledge that he had favoured the incursions of the Maharrattas; on the contrary, he declared that he had supported himself when the Seyds ^b would have taken his government from him; adding to this effect: "It pleased the Almighty that I baffled all their designs, in consequence of which I was misrepresented at court. Your majesty also, induced by their intrigues, intended to come against me with a mighty army, but heaven diverted the design, and you did me the justice to believe me a faithful servant." The credulous emperor persuaded of his integrity, would have made him his visier, but he pleaded that he was a Derveish, and therefore not inclined to accept of so high a station; that there were many persons about the court more capable of executing so high an office, and consequently he desired to be excused.

This lord however met a very gracious reception, and was honoured with the title of Asof Jah ^c. He soon discovered that things were not mended, that Devran Khan had his master's ear, and took pains to render him ridiculous: even in the emperor's presence he mentioned him with the highest mark of contempt, giving him the name of a cheat ^d. Such insolencies as this could not be relished by a man of his spirit: he at length declined coming to court, and secretly meditated revenge.

A true sense of humanity, and a right knowledge of mankind, can alone support us under such circumstances. If either of these is wanting, the corruption of the heart is apt to lead us to destroy those, who are the occasion of our humiliation. When the imagination is set at work, pride suggests a thousand expedients; and where power is added, what

^b Hossan Ali Khan and Abdallah Khan, who favoured the young Sultan Ibrahim already mentioned.

^c Asof Jah signifies in rank as Asof, the name of him who is pretended to have been visier to Solomon.

^d Maimoundgi. This word signifies a quack doctor or cheat; but here applicable to his cajoling address.

what mischiefs will it not effect? But whilst the shaft is aimed at one, they forget that millions may feel the wound.

The visier had made a double inter-marriage of his son and daughter, to the son and daughter of Nizam al Muluck, from whence the latter hoped to establish an interest with him, in opposition to the other lords; and what he could not rectify by his counsels, to confound by his intrigues. The visier however took the opposite party, and declined all violent measures, except such as gratified his own avarice. This enraged the haughty Indian so much the more; that rather than not gratify his private resentment, he resolved to use the arm of a foreign enemy. He knew that Saadit Khan, governor of Audih, was become a male-content as well as himself, he therefore entered into a secret correspondence with him, and it is said they both joined to inform Nadir Shah of the state of affairs at the Moghol's court.

Tho' it is granted, that Nizam al Muluck might be actuated by a spirit of revenge, it seems to me highly probable that Nadir did not stand in need of such instruments, for the execution of his ambitious designs. It can hardly be imagined, that he was ignorant of the general state of affairs in that empire, or of the immense riches possessed by the Moghol. He knew also the valour of his own troops, and the effeminacy of the Indians: how easy is it then to believe, that a project of this nature might be formed by so ambitious a man, whose necessities for the support of his army would tempt him to a desperate enterprize?

But it is not my business as an historian to enter very deep into the more secret springs of his conduct, which can be determined only by consequences, and of these every reader ought to be permitted to judge; where the causes of events cannot be clearly traced out, the mind may exercise its faculty, in passing that judgment which seems most consistent.

It appears to me, that tho' Nadir had the wisdom to keep his own counsel, he had taken the resolution of marching into India, in that exultation of heart, which arose from his great success against the Turks. The war, in which they were already engaged with the Russians, was certainly an additional reason of his carrying this design into execution.

Having resolved upon this expedition, he nominated his son Riza Kouli Myrza * regent of Persia. This young man had already given several marks of a genius very like his

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father's,

* His father being now declared king, the title of Myrza or prince of course belongs to the son, and by this name we shall hereafter call him.

father's, so that from a similarity of disposition Nadir added the affection of a friend to paternal love, and flattered himself into a belief, that the government would be secure in his son's hands.

C H A P. LIV.

Reflections on the different character of Alexander the Great and Nadir Shah. Moral considerations on false glory. Motives to Alexander and Nadir's invading India. Nadir leaves Isfahan in December 1736. Conduct of Hussein Khan, governor of Kandahar, and of the Afghans. Riza Kouli Myrza subdues the Ousbegs of Balkh and Bokhara. His indiscreet conduct in Persia. Indian lords correspond with Nadir.

IN reviewing the expedition of Nadir Shah into India, the detail of which contains the most memorable part of this history, the reader will indulge the inclination to which the subject naturally leads me, of making some comparison between this enterprize, and that of the celebrated Macedonian hero. It evidently appears, that these ravagers of the eastern world, Alexander and Nadir, were actuated by the same predominant passion; an unbounded desire of conquest: Alexander indeed had the strongest desire of fame and glory; Nadir added to his delight in military achievements, an insatiable thirst of accumulating riches. The one reigned by right of birth; the other by an usurped power; a power which could not be supported without a great military force, nor that force without great treasures.

As an ordinary effect of their intrepidity and rapid conquests, both were the idols of their soldiers; till Nadir became cruel and avaricious. Alexander was most beloved; Nadir most feared. The one affected a love to mankind; the other did not so much as pretend to act upon principles of humanity. Both appear to us as objects of terror and astonishment; but whilst some mixture of love or compassion is due to Alexander's memory; Nadir can only excite our hatred. The one had a real generosity in his nature, and a nobleness of sentiment, cultivated by a liberal education; the other, tho' superior in natural parts, was cunning, deceitful, and illiterate.

Had Alexander been born to an humble fortune, perhaps he might have given greater proofs of true heroism, than as a mighty prince and conqueror; his heart was formed to a love of virtue, but not in a degree equal to his power. Though he was not cruel, he killed his intimate friend ^f; though continent ^g, he burnt a city ^h to please a strumpet. Is it a virtue to distress mankind! A conduct so injurious as his, may entitle him to the fame of a conqueror, but not of a hero. Nadir himself had qualities, which are sometimes called virtues; yet we are sure that no prince, without renouncing humanity, can be in love with such a character; nor can future ages produce an imitator, without exhibiting a picture shaded with gloom and horror.

Human nature in all ages and countries is the same; but the secret causes by which one man differs so much from another, are not so apparent as the effects of different educations. There are few countries which have not had their Alexanders or their Nadirs; men actuated by a certain heroic spirit of military enthusiasm; confounding all the rules of morality and religion; exerting a boundless power of doing mischief; committing actions as much superior to the comprehension of vulgar minds, as contradictory to all the precepts of true philosophy; and, in short, proving by one constant pursuit, that the corruption of human nature may carry mankind much farther to do evil, by the subserviency of others as wicked, tho' not so brave as themselves, than all the principles of virtue can lead us to do good, for want of virtuous instruments.

If we look back to past ages, we find the world distressed by men of this stamp, under the specious name of conquest. How intoxicating is the love of fame in the breast of a prince, turned to war! whose genius is peculiarly military. The vain boast of triumphs seems to divert them from all thoughts of mortality, and tempts them to deify themselves in their own esteem. Amidst the din of war, a true sense of humanity is confounded, and heaven itself appears amiable only in its thunder.

The natural greatness of the mind in men born to empire, seems to find no object adequate to it, except in conquest and power. Men of understanding indeed discover the delusion; age and experience opens their eyes, and brings them down to the level of other mortals; it convinces them that the

^f Clitus.

^g With respect to the wife of Darius.

^h Persepolis.

the exercise of reason, in whatever station heaven has placed us, is the only solid glory : this passion for conquest will then appear in its true garb of distress and horror. Religion steps in to unveil this pretender ; and by shewing us what the rule of the divine administration is, opens a scene of real and transcendent joys, which carries up the mind to the true source of greatness.

What just reason can be assigned for the invasion of India by Alexander ? tho' his conquest of Darius may be censured by historians as rash and extravagant, as unguided by experience, and unsupported by wisdom ; yet if we consider the events previous to it, we shall find his conduct correspondent with the rule of princes in later ages. The expedition of Xerxes, and other attempts made by the Persians to enslave the Grecian republics, could not be easily forgotten. To prevent any future design of the same nature, was to take the first favourable opportunity of humbling the Persians. There was no other way to silence their scruples, to gratify their jealousy, nor to appease their resentment.

The Persian monarchy in the reign of Darius began to sink, in some measure, under its own weight. Wealth had created luxury ; luxury corruption ; both these contributed to the disunion and effeminacy of the people, and rendered them an easy conquest. If the unhappy circumstances of Persia at that time, were a concomitant motive to Alexander's invasion, it did not invalidate the stronger reasons of self-preservation.

Nadir had been less criminal, if the same motives had carried him into India ; but his expedition was certainly founded as much in avarice as ambition, or a fond notion of glory.

It is now two thousand and eighty-six years since Alexander made his expedition into India. Will the fame of Nadir last so long ? The arts and learning of Greece, afforded the means of transmitting down the feats of the Macedonian hero in a clearer manner, than the lights we receive from Persia under her present circumstances, even in regard to what happened but as yesterday. Some events however may be traced out, and afford that sort of pleasure, which the mind feels in the contemplation of objects of terror, whilst we enjoy, in a calm repose, all the transporting charms of liberty, and all the happy effects of a well regulated government.

About the end of December 1736, Nadir Shah began his march with eighty thousand men, of which the greatest part were cavalry. In a short time he was followed by a body of near thirty thousand men, under the command of Tæhmas Khan,

Khan, his lieutenant¹. The shortest rout to Kandahar would have been by Kherman; but it was hardly possible that so vast an army could be supported in a barren and desolate country: he therefore marched towards Casbin², from whence he directed his course through Khorasan; but we have no particular mention of him afterwards, till his arrival near Kandahar.

We have already given a short account¹ of this province, the source of those numerous calamities in which Persia was involved. What reputation the inhabitants had acquired as warriors, has also appeared in the course of this narrative. Hussein Khan, the brother of Maghmud, who was murdered by Ashreff, commanded in this place; he was a soldier of approved resolution, and actuated not only by the ambition of remaining independent, but also by the hopes of revenging himself of the Persians for the slaughter of his countrymen. He strengthened his alliance with the Tartars of Balkh and Samarcand, and also with the several princes of the mountains, who were in hopes of screening themselves from the tyranny of the Persian yoke. The force he had collected is said to have been above thirty thousand men; and the quantity of provisions laid into the city of Kandahar was sufficient for a very long siege.

The Khan, however, did not chuse to shut himself up immediately within walls, but determined to ^{1737.} try if he could not stop the progress of so mighty an army, conducted by so experienced a general. The great reputation of Nadir did not intimidate those brave mountaineers the Afghans, who had so often triumphed over the Persians. Hussein Khan therefore marched a large body of his men to the banks of a river, which is a branch of the Hindmend, there to dispute the passage. They supported themselves for some time, but at length were obliged to retire, after the loss of near two thousand men. Nadir then advanced, in order to invest Kandahar. As he had no heavy artillery with him, it was impossible he should reduce a fortification so advantageously situated, by any other means than by famine; he determined therefore only to blockade it.

Hussein Khan was not insensible of his danger; he offered to acknowledge Nadir's sovereignty, and as a tributary prince to

¹ Vekil or Vekeel.

² Some accounts mention his going by the way of Kherman, which is very natural to suppose, had that rout been practicable to a great army.

¹ Vol. II. Chap. XV.

to pay him homage, on condition he would retire to Herat without committing any further hostilities. This was too mean an object for Nadir's ambition : their terms not being accepted, the besieged resolved to try the fortune of their arms. This extraordinary siege lasted till the close of the year. In the interim, the garrison made many sallies, which cost much blood on both sides : one in particular, about the beginning of August, with the greatest part of the Afghan troops, who attacked the Persians with such impetuosity, that it was with the utmost difficulty they stood the shock.

Nadir caused a number of houses to be built here, as he had done before at Bagdat ; assuring Hussein Khan, that he would not decamp till he had taken the place. The communication with Persia was supported, by means of the numerous detachments which were sent to scour the country. In the Interim, Tæhmas Khan, his lieutenant, arrived with a reinforcement of thirty thousand men, so that he was in a condition to disperse all the flying parties which had incommoded his camp.

It is remarkable, that in the several sallies made by the Afghans, they took a great number of horses belonging to the Persians, and carried them into the city : these being food familiar to them, contributed in a great degree to draw out the siege to an extraordinary length. Nadir being mortified with such delays, entered at length into a treaty with Hussein Khan, and confirmed him in his government, upon condition that he would surrender the town, and that his army might be recruited with those soldiers who had behaved so gallantly in the defence of the place.

During the siege of Kandahar, Nadir Shah knowing the difficulties he should encounter, sent orders to Riza Kouli Myrza, whom he left at Mefched, to march with a body of troops and attack the Ousbeg Tartars of Balkh ^m, in order to make a diversion, or at least to prevent any succours coming to the Afghans from that quarter. Riza Kouli Myrza succeeded in this enterprize ; and from thence marched against the

^m This is the place where Tamerlane received the ensigns of sovereignty in 1370. This great conqueror was born at Keish, a day's journey from Samarcand, in 1336, and spread his conquests over the neighbouring countries into India, as far as Dehlie. Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt, also submitted to him, and he was victorious over Badjazet the emperor of the Turks. He fell sick at Atrar, upon his march against the Tartars on the borders of China, and died in February 1405. Samarcand in his time was a city of great note ; but the incessant wars of that country, have reduced it to mean condition.

the Ousbegs of Bokhara, who, in the interim, had made incursions into Khorasan. Having brought these Tartars also into subjection, he returned victorious to Mesched.

This young prince was in nothing inferior to his father, except the article of experience and judgment, as he plainly shewed, now that he was at liberty to act as the sovereign of Persia. Nadir had appointed his brother Ibrahim, governor of Aderbeitzan, and made him independent of his son. He also charged the prince to undertake nothing of moment, as far as the distance of their situation, and the circumstances of affairs would admit, without the advice of his uncle Ibrahim. The Lesgees, taking the advantage of Nadir's absence, had invaded Shirvan. Ibrahim Khan, who resided at Tavis, put himself at the head of a body of forces to oppose their progress, and coming to an engagement with them, he was killed in the field.

The Prince being now free of all bars to his authority, displaced Hatem Beg from his government of Isfahan, tho' he was reputed a man of skill and integrity; and what added to this imprudence, he placed in his room a man of a low birth and cruel dispositionⁿ. This action was followed by many others of a more oppressive nature, so that whilst Nadir was victorious abroad, the people laboured under a tyrannical yoke at home: this served to foment that fatal spirit of rebellion, to which the Persians were too prone without such provocation.

To return to Nadir, whom we left in possession of Kandahar: during the tedious siege in which he had been engaged, some discontented lords, belonging to the Moghol's court, are said to have held a treasonable correspondence with him; among these were Nizam Al Muluck, governor of Deccan, who was at Dehlie, and Saadit Khan, governor of Audih. Nadir, who was a master of intrigue and negotiation, being informed of the state of the Moghol's court, and the feeble condition of that prince's army, flattered the passions of those who were disposed to revolt, or secretly to favour his designs; and amused them with promises of his protection, and other private advantages, which would accrue to them in consequence of the success of his enterprize.

Before

ⁿ It is remarkable that the Persians are very unskilled in the art of physick, notwithstanding their faith in physicians is very great. This governor happened to labour under a distemper, which after some months had baffled the skill of those who undertook his cure, for which reason he ordered them to be fined, and severely beaten; such was the man whom the regent had preferred to the government of Isfahan.

Before Nadir could penetrate into India, he had several difficulties to encounter. He was too good a general to make an absolute declaration of his intentions^o, tho' they were apparent enough. It was near the middle of this year, before he began his march to Cabul. That he might leave no enemy behind him, some time had been spent in negotiating with the princes^p of the country bordering on Kandahar, who were tributary to the Great Moghol, particularly those of Langor, Bost, and Giarura. To some of these he made large presents, and others he engaged in his service, so that he had a fair prospect of extending his conquest to the utmost of his wishes; however, he endeavoured to persuade the Indian Omras, that he considered the enterprize as impracticable.

1738. Nizam Al Muluck was informed that Nadir directed his march towards Cabul: in order to intimidate Nacir Khan, who commanded the province and city of Cabul, and Sherzih Khan, who was governor of the castle; he wrote to them, representing the great difficulty of opposing the fortune and valour of Nadir Shah; and as there was little reason to hope they would be succoured by the imperial troops, they might do well to consider, in what manner to provide for their own security. He wrote also to Zekariah Khan, the governor of Lahor, who, as well as Nacir Khan, was in the interest of Devran Khan, the great object of hatred to the two discontented lords. It was suggested to Nadir, that if he could secure a passage through Cabul and Lahor, where the bravest troops of India were stationed, he would find little resistance in penetrating as far as the capital.

The first place in Nadir's rout was Ghorbund^r, which he garrisoned with his own people: from thence he marched to
Ghoznavi.

^o Most accounts make him ostentatious in this instance also, tho' it was by no means consistent with his safety, either in regard to the Turks or the enemy against whom he designed to march.

^p These are called Rajahs, who are the chiefs of those people who are distinguished by the name of Zemidars, which signifies possessors of land.

^r Sometimes wrote Gour-bend. This is a defile in the mountains of Sableston, and the entrance into the country of Gour, a district to the north of Khanjan. Three days journey from thence is Mimend. The other considerable places in this country are Rustack, and the forts of Zafer and Baglam, near which it is pretended are rich mines. Between Ghorbund and Abibaran are several districts of a delightful country.

Ghoznavi^f. The Pattans in their mountainous residences obliged the Persians to keep continually upon their guard, and had frequent skirmishes with them.

The terror which had been spread at the taking of Kandahar, facilitated the conquest of places so much inferior in strength. Cabul, esteemed the gates of India on that side, was the next object that obstructed his passage. This city^g is situated on the river Mehran^h, well fortified, and very difficult of access. It was formerly of great consideration among the Indians, and had submitted to that empire, upon condition of the sovereign's being crowned there. Nacir Khan, governor of the province, retired with his forces to Peishor: but Sherzih Khan defended the city with the utmost resolution for a whole month; repulsing the attacks of the Persians with his cannon and musketry, and killing a great number of them.

If this general had been supported, he might have bid fair to oblige Nadir to abandon his enterprize. Before the reduction of Kandahar, he dispatched couriers to Nacir Khan, whose jurisdiction extended over the whole province; also to Zekariah Khan, governor of Lahor, representing his dangerous circumstances, and intreating them to send him succours. He also made the court acquainted with the progress of the enemy; but this produced no effect. Fear had seized the minds of these lords, and they determined to follow the advice of Nizam Al Muluck, and submit to the fortune and victorious arms of the Persian king.

Nadir carried on the siege of Cabul with great Spirit. To convince the Indians of his determined resolution to preserve the exactest discipline towards them, as well as to support his
own

^f This is sometimes called Gaznin or Gazna. It is said to be a commercial city, the distance of eight days journey from Bamian, a mountainous country, where the air and water are remarkably wholesome and agreeable. The Turkish writers represent, that in this country are no venomous animals, and that the people live to a great age. It was also the residence of the princes of the dynasty of the Gaznevids; though some, I believe, by mistake place this city in Khorasan. See Vol. II. Note, page 122.

^g Here are iron mines, and aromatics.

^h This river is also called Hazarre, or a thousand, on account of the great number of towns, which are situated on the banks. It runs from the north to the southward of this city, and then takes its course to the east. After having passed Nekierhar, four days journey lower, and Peishor, two days journey farther, it goes to Devav, a great city, situated on the conflux of the waters of Pentchikiure, which come from the mountains of Kiouber in the west. Half a league from Cabul is a village and a fort of the same name.

own authority, he caused the bellies of eighty of his soldiers to be ripped open, for no other crime than being present when one of their comrades forced an Indian woman.

Nadir erected batteries ^w upon the eminences near Cabul, with which he played incessantly upon the town; and, at length, having made a sufficient breach, in the month of June he took the place by storm. Great part of the garrison was put to the sword; among these Sherzih Khan and his son fell a sacrifice, though their valour seemed to have deserved a better fate. The conquest of this place put the Persian king in possession of a considerable treasure, with a great value in jewels, arms, cloathing and provisions. The former had been shut up in vaults ever since the reign of Bahr Shah the Great Moghol; and were now of the greater consequence to Nadir, as they enabled him to pay his army. Besides, this was an earnest of the vast acquisitions his soldiers must certainly make, if they succeeded in the enterprize, which it was now apparent their king had resolved on.

C H A P. LV.

The news of the taking of Cabul arrives at Dehlie. Measures taken to oppose the Persian army. Jealousy between Nizam al Muluck and Devran Khan. Nadir sends an embassy and writes to Mahommed Shah. The difficulty which Nadir encounters in going from Cabul to the banks of the Indus. Peishor taken. Zekariah Khan, governor of Lahor, acquaints the court of his situation. The Indian army marches to Karnal.

WHEN the news of the taking of Cabul arrived at the court of the Great Moghol, this prince with all his lords were thoroughly alarmed, and determined that there was no time to lose in assembling an army to oppose the Persians. What added to the terror of the court, were the advices of Rajah * Tchi Sengue, who commanded a body of warlike

^w The artillery he had with him, was such as was portable upon camels; of this we shall remark further.

* This is the title given to the feudatory Indian princes.

warlike people [†] about Cashmir². This prince being entirely in the interest of Devran Khan, acquainted him, “ That the enterprize of Nadir Shah had for some time appeared to him, as a step concerted with some of the lords ⁴ of the Moghol’s court ; therefore he must be on his guard ; that Sherzih Khan was already fallen a sacrifice to his fidelity ; and that Nacir Khan had deserted his province and fled to Peishor : at the same time he offered his service to join the royal ensigns, and recommended to Devran Khan to undertake the command of the imperial army ; whilst Zekariah Khan did his utmost to oppose the progress of the enemy through Lahor.”

Devran Khan was sensible of the fidelity of this prince, and saw that nothing but military force could save the capital from plunder, or prevent all the fatal consequences of war, against so formidable an enemy as Nadir. He therefore represented to the sultan, the necessity of marching in person at the head of his army, as far as Lahor, where he might join the Khans Zekariah and Nacir. This advice was approved by Nizam al Muluck, who pressed the execution of it ; and to shew a greater tenderness for the emperor, he added that his majesty ought not to expose his person, but to stop

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[†] These are called Rajpouts, and are esteemed the best soldiers in India. There are several tribes of them subject to the Rajahs, of whom some are independent of the Moghol.

² Cashmir, or as it is wrote Cishmir and Kichemir, is bordered by Lahor, Tebet, and Biddukshan, and is represented as a most delightful and fruitful country. The mountains with which these people are surrounded are so strong a fortification, that, according to the Turkish writers, hardly any of the eastern ravagers have penetrated into their country. They never felt any of the calamities which Ginghiz Khan, the great Turkuman conqueror, spread over the east. Their capital is called Serinekier, and the river which passes through their country, is very considerable, and communicates with the Tchenhav above Multan. The inhabitants of this country are also remarkable for their vivacity, and the beauty of their persons. The delicacy of their climate might naturally incline them to voluptuousness, but they live much according to nature, their pleasures being for the most part innocent and simple ; they love dancing and musick, and drink wine in moderation ; they are idolaters of the religion of the Magi, and many of them given to devotion and mortification. They are remarkable for the manufacture of the fine sashes, in so great use all over the east.

⁴ There are several of these Moghol Omras, who are Tartars and Persians by extraction, and who seemed now to be the greatest objects of the jealousy of the Rajah.

at Lahor; whilst himself, and the other chiefs, advanced with the army towards Cabul, to give the enemy battle.

The royal tents ^b, with all the parade of an Indian monarch, were ordered to the gardens of Shalimar, a small distance from Dehlie. The Great Moghol himself was upon his departure, when Devran Khan, to the surprize of the whole court, gave orders to suspend the intended expedition. This to all appearance arose either from his jealousy that Nizam al Muluck was in correspondency with the enemy, or from his contempt of the counsels of a man whom he abhorred. But such was the disunion of that court, on whom the unhappy Indians depended at this time for their safety.

Nizam al Muluck being informed of so unexpected a change of counsels, returned to court, and renewed his intreaties, that the army might march to Lahor: but the discord which reigned among the chiefs, confounded all their measures. The officers, who knew that Devran Khan was devoted to the interest of their master the Great Moghol, paid an implicit obedience to him, in all the expedients he tried to obstruct the expedition. Thus it was difficult to determine, whether Devran Khan did not act more like an open traitor, than Nizam al Muluck as a secret one.

Nadir having made himself master of Cabul, disguised his future designs under the cloak of friendship. For this purpose, he sent an ambassador with a letter to Mahommed Shah the Indian emperor. The contents are as follows:

“ Be it clear to the enlightened mind of your high majesty, that my taking Cabul is intirely out of zeal for religion^c, and friendship for you. I never imagined that a king of muslulmen would be tributary to the wretches of Deccan^d. My stay on this side the Indus^e, is with a design, that when these infidels shall move again towards Hindostan^f, I may send a victorious army to drive them to the abyss of hell.

“ History

^b Peishkhanna is the term given to the royal tents and their appendages in India.

^c This he calls Islam, by which is meant safety; and here the word is meant to denote the Mahommedan religion.

^d The Maharrattas, whom I have already mentioned as the chief disturbers of the Moghol's empire. These people are idolaters, and were at this time very powerful.

^e This river is called Attok, which is the name given by the Orientals to the upper part of the Indus.

^f The empire in general is called Hindostan, but here more peculiarly applicable to the province of Dehlie.

“ History abounds in proofs of the friendship which have
 “ subsisted between our kings and your majesty’s royal pre-
 “ decessors. And now, by Mortisa Ali I swear, that I nei-
 “ ther had, nor yet have any other view, than to express
 “ my friendship, and shew my concern for religion. I al-
 “ ways was, and will be a friend to your illustrious house,
 “ whatever suspicions you may entertain to the contrary.”

It is very hard to reconcile the contents of this letter upon any principle of common probity; but this indeed was what Nadir had the least pretensions to.

Though we have observed that Cabul is the key of the western and northern parts of India, there is a considerable tract of country between that city and the Indus, which has been generally considered as the barrier. The cheapest and most practicable method for the execution of Nadir’s designs, was to cultivate a good understanding with the people of those quarters. The Sasis, a tribe of Pattans, in that country, are remarkable for their valour, and might have given him great trouble. He therefore entered into an alliance with them, making part of the plunder of Cabul the price of their friendship.

His next step was to engage in his interest Nacir Khan, who was at Peishor. Tho’ this chief had not the courage to remain in or near Cabul, the frontier town of his district; yet he was not totally intimidated. The court sent him no supply of troops, but assisted him with a remittance of forty lacks* of rupees; by means of this sum he might raise forces to join the Pattans of that province, and oppose the enemy. In expectation therefore of further reinforcements from Dehlie, he levied men, and prepared to fight the Persians.

Nadir having left a strong garrison in Cabul, sent several messages to Nacir Khan, to invite him to a submission; and then continued his march towards Peishor. Passing the Behat^b, and the Cou^c, he advanced into the narrow defiles, which cover that province. Here several Indian princes assembled their troops, cutting down trees, breaking up roads, and using other inventions to obstruct his march. The frequent attacks of these mountaineers, incommoded

H h 2

* A lack is 100,000 rupees of 2s. 6d. consequently this sum makes 500,000 l.

^b The antient name when Alexander invaded India was Cophene.

^c Choaspe. The borders of these rivers were then inhabited by the Arafoci and other nations, mentioned by antient historians.

him for near a whole month, during which space he lost a considerable number of men.

Those, who are versed in military affairs, know that it is difficult for an army to pass thro' defiles, even when there is no enemy to oppose it; but a long tract of mountainous country, inhabited by people accustomed to arms, must expose the most formidable body of troops to great danger. Nadir was at length obliged to enter into a treaty with their chiefs: he declared that he meant them no harm; and represented to them that they were certainly enemies to their own interest, by appearing in arms against him, when he was ready to receive them under his protection, to make them presents, and even to engage them in his pay, that they might share his fortune in the war.

It was a favourable circumstance to Nadir, that the Indian court had kept these mountaineers in arrears for their pay. All the ordinary emoluments ^k, which were wont to be allowed them, the corruption of the Moghol's ministers had withheld during four years. The governors of the neighbouring provinces had deserted their posts, or neglected to arm themselves in a manner suitable to the occasion. Under these circumstances, these people listened to Nadir's propositions, and at length not only opened a free passage to him, but numbers of them enlisted themselves in his army, insomuch that it soon became as strong as when he left Kandahar. The Sasis in particular, after they had joined the Persians, conducted Nadir the safest and shortest way to Peishor.

It is natural to conclude, that the Persian king expected that such acts of hostility would alarm the Indian court, and not only occasion the greater preparations to oppose him, but probably induce them to remove a great part of their riches. Whatever his motive might be, he sent another embassy to the Great Moghol. Mahommed Khan, Turkuman ^l, was chosen for this purpose, and dispatched in the month of August, with offers of friendship, and to demand the sum of

four

^k The revenues of this mountainous country being insufficient to maintain a body of troops able to guard the frontiers, a certain sum of money was appointed to be annually remitted them, but of late years it had been neglected.

^l The same may be observed here of Turkuman as before of Balouche, viz. that these officers are distinguished by their countries.

four crores¹, and four provinces^m; as if Nadir by this means intended to enter into a composition, or to render the refusal a more specious pretence for further hostilities.

Peishor not lying directly in the rout, Nadir left the main body of his army, and marched with a detachment of cavalry towards that city. Nacir Khan had collected a body of troops, but few of them had any experience: the greatest part not suspecting that the Persian army could have passed the defiles with such expedition, deserted upon the approach of the enemy. Nacir was thus left in the neighbourhood of Peishor, with seven thousand men only; however, he caused an intrenchment to be thrown up, and with this small body he made a gallant defence for some hours; but the Persians at length forced his lines. Most of those who escaped the sword, were taken prisoners. The neighbouring Patans being now disposed to court the friendship of Nadir, delivered up into his hand Nacir Khan, who fled from Peishor. The proof this general had given of bravery and fidelity, under such great disadvantages, engaged the esteem of Nadir. He imprisoned him for some days, but afterwards promised him that protection which he had not received from the Moghol's court; and by threats and fair words he won this brave man to his interest.

The effect of this victory was the taking of Peishor, which Nadir soon after entered in triumph. Nothing is said concerning the riches of this city, tho' we must assign some proportion of wealth to it, since it is represented of considerable extent, and the capital of a province.

On the news that Peishor was taken, and that Nadir Shah was preparing to pass the Indus, the Moghol's court, already in great disorder, was struck with terror. From Peishor to Dehlie is 450 milesⁿ. In this distance are several rivers and difficult passes, which it was expected would retard the march of the Persian army. The court was also flattered with hopes that Zekariah Khan, the governor of Lahor, would form an army capable of stopping the progress of the enemy. These circumstances however being insufficient to remove their apprehensions, a whole crore of rupees^o was

H h 3

at

¹ A crore is 100 lacks, or 1,250,000 *l.* consequently this demand was for five millions sterling.

^m These the Indians call Soubahs. Soubahdar is often used as governor or lieutenant of a province.

ⁿ They reckon it 202 fofs, each fofs of 4000 yards, or 2½ miles.

^o 1,250,000 *l.*

at once issued out of the treasury for enlisting men; and five hundred carriage-guns of different kinds, with three thousand harquebusses, were appointed for the expedition, besides a great number of barbed elephants, with all other appurtenances of oriental warriors.

Devran Khan and Nizam al Muluck, had the joint command of the army. This circumstance alone was sufficient to have rendered the best projected design abortive. We need not go so far as India, to see the sad effects of those enterprizes, which are left to the joint management of men at enmity with each other. The third of December they pitched their tents in the neighbourhood of Dehlie. Saadit Khan, the governor of Audih, was sent for to court to join the other chiefs, or to command the emperors guards. This prince was already disposed to retreat to Cassi Benaris^p, but the chiefs entreated him to continue with them; representing, that his absence would be dangerous to the state, under such critical circumstances.

Zekariah Khan, in the mean while, acquainted the court of the dangerous situation he was in; that several of the tribes in the mountainous country had joined the Persians; and that if they did not send him an immediate support, he could not make head against the enemy. The merchants and many other persons of the greatest property in Lahor, in the mean while retired with their effects.

The pomp and ceremony of the imperial army of India, was at length settled. This was one of the most brilliant and numerous, tho' not the most formidable, that had for many ages appeared in the east. It consisted of near two hundred thousand fighting men, of which a great part was cavalry. Mahommed Shah, the Great Moghol, commanded in person, and nothing essential to the majesty of his throne was wanting, except wisdom, valour, and unanimity.

At length, after slow marches, and receiving several reinforcements on the road, they pitched their tents in the plains of Karnal, fifty-five leagues from the capital. The young prince, Sultan Achmed, had an equipage prepared for him with great pomp and splendor, and was appointed commander of the van guard^q.

The

^p A city in the province of Alehabad, famous for the devotion which is paid there.

^q They call this the Harol, which signifies either the vanguard, or the title of the officer that commands any body of forces, which advances at the head of an Indian army.

The circuit of the camp was very large^r, fortified with intrenchments, and a great part of it strengthened with artillery. In the center were the emperor's own quarters^f; those of Nizam al Muluck fronted them; and under him was the particular ordinance of the court, and the train belonging to it. On the right wing was Devran Khan, the prime minister, with five other lords under his command; Kummir O'Din^t Khan, with three Omras, commanded on the left; behind these were many general officers, whose names would rather confound than delight the reader, and among them were the Jaats and Aheers^u. Though the sovereign commanded in person, yet each lord seemed to be uncontrollable with regard to the respective body under him.

Nizam al Muluck, instead of taking pains to encourage his soldiers, represented the valour and fortune of the Persian king as irresistible. It is probable, that the inexperience of the Indians in the art of war, must in any case have rendered them inferior to the veteran soldiers of Nadir Shah; but if we consider the unhappy situation of this numerous army, it seemed to be collected only for the derision of the Persians.

C H A P. LVI.

Nadir's pomp when he entered the Indian territories. His manner of passing rivers. Short account of the Indus: Nadir passes this river. Jeminabad and Lahor taken. Nadir arrives on the plains of Karnal.

VICTORY seemed now to court the ambitious Nadir: elate with the hopes of giving laws to this vast empire, he affected a more than common state.

H h 4

Coffem

^r Some writers mention it as twelve miles; but we cannot suppose they made intrenchments so far, or that they could defend so vast a circuit.

^f These are called Mourcha, which signifies either barricadoes or intrenchments; from whence we may infer he had a particular intrenchment within the main circuit of the camp.

^t These words signify the moon of religion. This person was the visier to the Great Moghol.

^u These are two different tribes of the Rajpouts.

Cossem Khan was his Athemat Doulet^w: he, with the Arrizbegi^x, were the persons through whom most of the orders were given, and petitions preferred. Nadir's sentences, as at other times, were very summary, and his business dispatched in a short time. He required information of every thing that passed, and observed a strict administration of justice: he attended business very regularly, sitting in his tent of audience till noon; and after reposing himself a short time, he returned again, and remained there till the evening. His Chiaux^y were kept to their duty more than usual, to proclaim his victories as he passed along; besides these and his great officers of state, a considerable number of young men with standards of red silk adorned with silver, were ordered to attend upon extraordinary occasions.

The great preparations which were making at the Moghol's court to oppose his progress, seemed to give him no sort of concern. On the contrary, he prepared himself to receive the homage of the Indian lords, and first of Zekariah Khan, the governor of Lahor. After establishing a garrison at Peishor, he advanced to the banks of the Indus, 1739. where he arrived the beginning of January. He had already taken his measures for the passage of that river. Mahommed Beg^z, was previously detached with a considerable body of troops, to build a sufficient number of boats, by means of which he might throw a bridge over the river. Nadir's ordinary method was to use two iron-chains^a, to which he fixed the skins of beasts blown up; these floating upon the surface, supported the several parts of a small bridge of timber, which he carried with him. This chain being secured

^w See Vol. II. Page 139. Signifies supporter of power, or as some construe it, the security of fortune; this is the same person whom I have mentioned in Vol. I. Page 223. This man was also honoured with the title of Nazem Munazem, or him who sets things in order; and Mothir al Muluck, or worthy of a kingdom.

^x The presenter of petitions.

^y The 900 guards mentioned in Vol. I. Page 216.

^z This is the same Mahommed afterwards made a Khan, who was admiral of the Caspian in 1744, and of whom I received such uncivil treatment. See Vol. I. Page 189.

^a Some writers mention that Nadir Shah carried with him on camels a number of pieces of boats, to be joined upon occasion, this may be easily confounded with the parts of a bridge, which he did carry with him for the passage of small rivers, and which upon an extremity might answer his purpose over greater rivers.

cured on both sides of a river, served also to hold a regular bridge of boats.

The Indus of the antients, now more generally denominated the Scind, is one of the most considerable rivers in all Asia: in India only the Ganges exceeds it. In this place it divides the provinces of Lahor and Peishor, and is commonly called the Attok, from a great fort on the eastern side. It is subject, like the Nile, to be overflown, and like that is one great cause of the fertility of its banks; here are also numbers of crocodiles. Its course from north to south is computed to be 900 miles ^b, or forty-two days journey. The several branches of it take different names; the chief of which are the Shoub or Sielmequs ^c, the Shantrou ^d, the Ravi ^e, and the Viah ^f; thus forming five streams: the province of Lahor is for that reason called Pengab ^g; and is one of the most fertile countries in Hindostan.

Zekariah Khan did not attempt to oppose the Persian army at their passage of the Attok. His real design was to submit, agreeably to the counsel he had received from Nizam al Muluck; however, to save appearances, he made preparations for a defence. Nadir marched directly to Yeminabad, a city of some note in the jurisdiction of Zekariah Khan. Here Kullinder Khan commanded with a body of ten thousand men, designing to oppose the Persians. Nadir Khan, who now had a post in Nadir's army, was entrusted with the attack of this city, which the Persians took, and killed the Indian general. Nadir had sent to Zekariah Khan to invite him to a submission; the messenger was called before the general divan, and treated with some incivility. This however was but an effect of policy to disguise his resolution to surrender. He then marched out, and advanced above twenty miles from Lahor, with an army of twenty thousand men. As soon as he heard the fate of Yeminabad, he retreated back immediately to the capital of the province. Here he made a shew of defence, but after three days capitulated, on condition that the city should be spared.

This

^b These are sometimes called leagues, but the map by no means allows above 12 or 15 degrees, consequently it cannot exceed 900 miles; but if we take in the course of the several large branches of it, the miles may be easily reckoned leagues.

^c The antient Hyphases.

^d Hydaspes.

^e Acesines.

^f Hydraotes.

^g Or five waters.

This is the country of which Porus was king, when Alexander made his memorable expedition into India. The neighbouring provinces were then ruled by their respective sovereigns, as we now find them divided by the jealousy and corruption of their chiefs. The scene of his first exploits in India was on the banks of the Guræus¹, which he passed. The eastern side of this part of the Indus was called Taxila. Here we find that Mophis, king of the country, submitted to Alexander, who confirmed this Indian prince in his dominion, or in other words, did not commit any violence or injustice towards him. As an effect of the generosity of the Grecian hero, Mophis received the name of Taxiles. What future ages may think of modern histories, I am no judge; but there are numerous circumstances in antient accounts, even in authors of the highest reputation, which appear as the fumes of superstition or the creatures of fancy: we must not however be ingenious to undeceive ourselves in things of an indifferent nature, so long as they give us pleasure. We know how hard it is to come at the truth of things which happened yesterday.

Porus, the sovereign of Lahor, was exceeded by the skill and fortune, rather than by the valour of the Macedonian conqueror; he led on his chariots of war and embattled elephants, disdaining to yield. In this he seems to have judged ill; if he had sacrificed to the pride of the Grecian instead of his own, and only paid the tribute of a formal submission, he might probably have saved the lives of twenty-three thousand Indians, who are said to have died that day in defence of their liberty. Under the notion of clemency, Alexander then restored to him the kingdom which he could not keep; nor was there one good reason why he conquered it. The only true beneficent action he did, was to reconcile Taxiles and Porus.

After subduing Persia, and all the country as far as this place, his soldiers, happily for the Indians, were at length tired of their knight-errantry, and insisted upon returning home; he therefore made this the boundary of his victory in the east, though he had designed to march as far as the Ganges. He returned to Babylon with the name of a conqueror, tho' with much less treasure than Nadir Shah. In his way home he subdued all the country on the banks of the Indus. He sent part of his forces in ships down that river into the Indian ocean; from whence they entered the
gulph

¹ This is called at present Nilab, being the upper part of the Indus.

golph of Persia, and directing their course up the Tigris, arrived at Babylon. Those, who marched by land, crossed Sablestan and Segestan, not without several encounters with the inhabitants of those countries, in which much blood was spilt. Thence traversing Persia^k, which owned the conqueror, after a perilous and laborious march he arrived at the seat of his empire, having been absent twenty months.

Nadir remained at Lahor eight days, and refreshed his army in the gardens of Shalimar^l; he then passed the river Shoul, and traversing Serhind and Taniseer, he arrived with forty thousand men in the neighbourhood of a village called Tillauvri, which is not far from the plains of Karnal. Here he halted to reconnoitre the situation of the Indian army, and determine what measures to pursue. After a march of twenty-five months for eighteen hundred and fifty miles^m, he was almost arrived at the fruition of the desired object. It was not difficult in a general of common sagacity to foresee, that so vast a multitude of people would not be able to support themselves long in that situation; and they must either disperse, or come to an engagement.

^k Now Faristan.

^l These gardens are of the same name as those of Dehlie.

^m This computation is from Isfahan, viz. from that city to Kandahar is reckoned 1040 miles, and from thence to Dehlie 810.

C H A P. LVII.

The number of the Persian army. Saadit Khan arrives at the Indian camp. He and Devran Khan begin the engagement. Nadir's stratagem to draw the Indians to battle. Saadit Khan taken prisoner, and Devran Khan mortally wounded. Nadir's manner of opposing the Indian elephants. Loss of the Indians in the field. Distress of the Indian camp after the battle. Interview between Nadir and Nizam al Muluck; also between the Persian king and the Great Moghol. Numbers of the Indians slain in marauding. Mahommed Shah delivers himself into the hands of Nadir. Indian effects sealed up in Dehlie.

NADIR was now within ten miles of the Indian army. On the 12th of February he dispatched Hahdgee Khan with his advanced guard^a, consisting of six thousand of the best troops of Kourdistan. His whole army amounted to near one hundred and sixty thousand men, of which a third part were servants and domestics: these having collected a sufficient number of camels, horses^b, and mules in their rout, were all mounted, and some of them compleatly armed. Their women, being not less than six thousand, were dressed with great coats^c of crimson cloth, after the manner of the men, and not to be distinguished at a distance; so that the whole made a very formidable appearance.

Nadir finding the water at Tillauvri insufficient to supply his soldiers, advanced two miles nearer the Indian army; and the 14th of February he encamped not far from the rear of Devran Khan, at a time when Saadit Khan was just arrived in the camp of the great Moghol, with a reinforcement of twenty thousand men. Whatever the nature of Saadit's treason might have been, as soon as he saw his fellow-soldiers in distress for provisions, and ready to be overwhelmed by a powerful and fortunate army, the impulse of his heart carried him instantly to the tent of Mahommed Shah, and with the freedom of a soldier he told his sovereign, that there was no time to be lost in giving battle to the Persians;

^a Kourrol, which is the same as the Harrol of the Indians.

^b There are in the highland country of Kandahar and Cabul a small kind of horses called Yabous, which are very serviceable.

^c These are called Barranni; Barran signifies rain, from whence the name of this coat is derived.

Persians ; that if the other generals refused to follow him, he would commence the attack with such part of his troops as were come up ; desiring rather to die sword in hand, than fall ingloriously into the power of an enemy through the necessity of hunger.

Nizam al Muluck, who seemed never to have intended to bring things to the extremity of a battle, opposed this counsel ; pretending, according to the superstition of the Mahomedans, that the day was not fortunate ; and as there was no necessity, they ought to defer it. Saadit Khan, though suspected of being leagued with this treacherous minister, had too much ardour as a soldier to be restrained by any such consideration.

In the mean while, the six thousand Kourds detached by Nadir Shah, through the desire of booty, had fallen on a party of the Indians, and began to pillage the baggage of Devran Khan. There was no time to debate : Saadit Khan mounted his elephant, led on his forces, and repulsed the Kourds. Devran Khan now roused by a jealousy of the glory of a man, whom he knew wished his disgrace, brought his men also to the charge immediately, with a design to support Saadit Khan ; so that the engagement grew warm on both sides.

Nadir, being apprised of what was passing, sent a body of troops to assist his van ; and jealous of supporting the reputation of his arms in his first encounter, he detached three thousand of his best troops in three different bodies, and placed them in ambush. He also sent a small body of five hundred men against Devran Khan, and another of the same number against Saadit Khan, in order to draw them into the field. Having then made a proper disposition of the main body of his army, he advanced at the head of a thousand Afshar horse to direct the battle.

This disposition had the desired effect. The three thousand men in ambuscade falling upon the troops of Saadit Khan, put them to flight, and took their general prisoner. Devran Khan being followed by above twenty Omras and general officers, at the head of their respective bodies, supported his ground with great resolution, till the engagement became more general. At length having received a dangerous wound, he fell extended upon his elephant, and was carried off the field. A report that he was dead, spread a dismay through the whole Indian camp.

There was a circumstance pretty remarkable, which I find omitted by those who have given us an account of this battle.

They

They mention indeed the elephants, but not what use was made of them. These formidable animals were conducted at the head of the Indian army, and armed for battle: they have ever been represented in eastern wars as objects of great terror; their size, the castles upon their backs, and all the apparatus of war, have been described by historians, painters and poets, in a light which fills the imagination with dread. Nadir was not ignorant in what manner the Indians fight, and therefore caused a number of stages to be made, and fixed across two camels. On these stages he laid naptha, and a mixture of combustibles, and ordered them to be set on fire. It is well known with what terror these huge animals behold this element; so that instead of over-turning the Persian army, at the approach of the camels the elephants turned about, and put a great part of the Indian army into confusion.

In this battle seventeen thousand Indians were slain, among whom were a great number of persons of the first distinction. Those who fled from the field, spread terror and confusion through their whole camp. Several took the opportunity of plundering the tents of their own commanders. Numbers, who attended the baggage brought into the field, fled towards Dehlie, which afforded a favourable opportunity to the Persians to kill and pillage at discretion. In this action not half of the Indian army was engaged, and only about fifty thousand of the troops of Nadir Shah; he lost on his part only two thousand five hundred men, who were interred the same night; but there were near twice as many wounded.

Devran Khan lost his eldest son, and the wound he himself had received, proved mortal. His great loss of blood occasioned his fainting: when he came to his senses, he had the additional affliction to find all his tents and baggage plundered; they were therefore obliged to carry him to the tents of Mahommed Shah, to whom he had been reported as killed. The sight of this favourite minister, under these melancholy circumstances, gave the emperor the deepest concern. In a short time after this lord died of his wounds, which seemed to give him less pain, than to behold his enemy Nizam Al Muluck triumphing in the favour of his master, and planning schemes to gratify his base resentment.

In this confused state of affairs in the Indian camp, Nadir Shah advanced to the quarters of Nizam Al Muluck; this general had been joined by several other lords, who drew up their forces in a line of battle, as if they meant to stop the progress

progress of the enemy. Night coming on, prevented the Persians from pursuing their victory. The Indian camp was now so very thin, that from the emperor's own quarters to those of Nizam Al Muluck, which was near two miles, hardly any people were found. In the night a grand consultation was held, in which Nizam Al Muluck related in the most affecting manner, the deplorable state to which the fortune of that day had already reduced the court; expatiating upon the fatal effects of war, and the danger to which the emperor's person was exposed; that every moment brought news of the death of some person beloved by his majesty, and of great consequence to the state; his opinion therefore was to accommodate matters with Nadir Shah, since they could no longer depend on the success of their arms.

The Indian monarch, though no warrior, was more inclined to trust to the fortune of a second battle, than to consent to an accommodation, which could be bought only at the price of immense treasures, and must upon other accounts be inglorious. But those on whom he most depended had been killed or dangerously wounded; so that no proper person could be found in whom to confide the command of his forces: nor was he less at a loss as to the direction of his councils. Whatever suspicions he might entertain of Nizam Al Muluck, the ascendancy which this minister had acquired, in some measure obliged him to trust him implicitly. The death of Devran Khan, at once removed the bar to the ambition of Nizam Al Muluck, as well as the object of his hatred. At length full power was given to this minister, to treat with the Persian monarch. Azim Ali Khan was appointed to attend him; of which Nadir Shah was acquainted. The third day after the battle, the ceremonial being previously adjusted, they pitched their tents between the two camps: and a Persian officer was sent to conduct these Indian lords into the presence of Nadir Shah.

The Persian monarch received them in a gracious manner, causing them to sit in his presence; and then he spoke to this effect: "It is now four months since I sent my ambassador to Mahommed Shah your master, to demand of him the payment of what is due to Persia; why has he detained my people, and given me no answer; and at length obliged me to make so long and laborious a march?" Nizam Al Muluck excused himself, alledging that he had been in his government at Deccan; that as soon as he came to court he had used his endeavours to bring the affair to a conclusion,

clusion, but that his demands were greater than the empire could answer ⁹.

Nadir smiled at the excuse, and shewed him the accounts of the Moghol's treasure; adding to this effect: "The grand-father of Mahommed Shah and uncle of Jeanguir, once demanded of Persia the succour of ten thousand men. Persia sent them, and bore the expence, on condition of being reimbursed; which has never yet been done. By the treaties of alliance subsisting between the two empires, they ought reciprocally to support each other. Persia having been long rent with civil wars, the same force has been demanded of you; but no answer was ever made. I have borrowed large sums, for which I pay interest, to retake from the Turks the provinces which they had possessed themselves of belonging to Persia. The neglect of the treaties on your part, has been the cause of the misfortunes which have happened to Persia: who is to repair these injuries? I had intended to put your emperor and his troops to the sword, but I will favour them; go and tell him to come to me, and we will make up our quarrel in a convenient manner."

The 18th of February was accordingly appointed for the meeting of the two monarchs. Mahommed Shah, emperor of Hindostan, seated in a royal litter ^r, issued from his camp, attended by Azim Ali Khan, Ghazi O'Din Khan, several eunuchs, and about two hundred horse: he was met half-way by Tæhmas Khan, the lieutenant ^s of the Persian king, who paid him the honours due to his rank. Tæhmas then required the eunuchs and cavalry to halt; and attended the Great Moghol with the Persian guard. At the entrance of Nadir's camp he was met by Nefr Ali Myrza, who was sent by the command of his father to conduct the Indian king to the royal tent. Nadir came forth to receive him, and having placed him on his left-side, after the ordinary compliments, he addressed him to this effect: "Is it possible that
" you

⁹ It is said that Nizam Al Muluck went so far as to make him the servile compliment, that the desire of seeing a king of such renown, and to kiss the dust of his feet, was so great, that they purposely neglected his request. The Orientals deal much in hyperboles; but such a compliment as this would rather have insulted the common sense of the prince to whom it was paid, than gratified his pride. According to what is related, this Indian did actually invite Nadir into India, hardly foreseeing what would happen.

^r Takht Revan, which signifies a moving throne.

^s Vakeel or Vekil.

“ you should have thus abandoned the care of your own af-
 “ fairs to oblige me to make you this visit? I sent you two
 “ ambassadors; one of them, contrary to the laws of all na-
 “ tions, and to the friendship subsisting between us, was
 “ murdered at Peishor; nor did your ministers send me any
 “ satisfactory answer to my letters which reached your hands.
 “ When I entered your dominions, you never deputed any
 “ one to ask me who I was, or what my intentions were;
 “ even when I advanced to Lahor, and sent you a message
 “ of salutation, I received no answer. When the comman-
 “ ders of your forces were awakened out of their lethargy,
 “ instead of negotiating for a reconciliation, they met in a
 “ tumultuous manner to stop my progress. Afterwards you
 “ cooped yourselves up in your intrenchments, without con-
 “ sidering, that if your enemy was stronger than you, it
 “ was impossible to remain in that situation without being
 “ starved; and if he was weaker, it was as dishonourable as
 “ unnecessary: at length, without any precaution, you put
 “ all to the issue of one blow. Tho’ I saw how you were
 “ entangled, I made you offers of accommodation^u; but
 “ you was so ill advised, or puffed up with childish conceits,
 “ that you neglected the terms of my friendship, and aban-
 “ doned your own interest. Now you see to what straits
 “ you are reduced by the victorious armies of Persia. How
 “ little able you have been to govern your own people, ap-
 “ pears by your granting for several years a tax^w to infidels,
 “ by whom it ought to have been paid; and you have suf-
 “ fered them to over-run your country.

“ However, as the race of Temur have never done any
 “ remarkable injury to the sovereigns of Persia, I will not
 “ take the empire from you; I only mean to indemnify my-
 “ self for the great expence of this war. After I have re-
 “ freshed my army at Dehlie, and received the subsidy^x
 “ which must be paid, I will leave you in possession of your
 “ dominions.”

Mahommed Shah heard this speech with that silence, which
 testifies sorrow and confusion; tho’ it was some consolation

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I i

to

^u I do not find any mention made of such offer after the Indian army was assembled on the plains of Karnal, to which this seems to allude.

^w This tax, called the Jeziah, was wont to be paid by those who were not Mahommedans.

^x This is called a Peiscush, or present from an inferior to a superior. The sum agreed for was twenty crores, which we shall have occasion to mention.

to receive assurance of his life and empire. Language so foreign to that of a court, could not but touch the heart of a king, whose weakness did not amount to insensibility. It may perhaps appear a little strange, that the captive monarch should be suffered to return to his own camp; but our surprise will cease, if we reflect that Nadir had nothing to fear from his military force; and that as riches were his chief object, the more gently he conducted himself towards the Indians, till he should arrive at Dehlie, the less danger there would be of their concealing or destroying their treasures.

Mahommed Shah retired to his camp, in some degree relieved from his inquietude; tho' he knew not into what difficulties the avarice of the conqueror might plunge him. He ordered the dead bodies, which lay spread for near the space of twelve miles, to be interred; but those who were wounded and unable to move, were left to expire, there being no one that could afford them any succour. At the same time, the military chest, with all the treasure of Mahommed Shah, was brought to Nadir.

Some of the Indian lords, who were forward to ingratiate themselves with the conqueror, represented that there were many thousand horses and camels belonging to the soldiers and followers of the Moghol's camp; and as by his clemency these people had received quarter, they ought not to think it any hardship to deliver such as his officers should think proper to chuse. To this he replied; that the bread of soldiers depended, in a great measure, on their horses; and that the loss of these in their present circumstances, might expose them and their families to beggary; and as he had given them quarter, they should depart unmolested.

The Indian camp had been in great distress almost from the very time they assembled in the plains of Karnal. Representation being now made, that the sutlers^y by their extortions had raised the price of bread to an exorbitant degree, Mahommed Shah ordered their shops to be broke open. This answered no other purpose, than to waste and disperse the little provision that remained, so that a pound of wheat was not to be had for less than the value of four shillings. What had contributed to render the provisions so excessive dear, was the vigilance of the flying parties of the Persian

^y Banians, who are mostly trading people in India. They are of a particular sect, who believe the transmigration of souls, whether of man or beast; from whence they are very harmless in their conduct, lest they should injure one of their own friends or relations, in the appearance of a bird or beast.

Persian army, who within forty miles round the camp, had at different times cut off not less than fourteen thousand Indian marauders. A body of Nadir's troops, who at this time were sent to Taniseer, slaughtered a great number of the inhabitants, plundered the town, and returned to their camp with a considerable booty.

The next day, after the bodies of the Indians were interred, Nadir sent an officer with a detachment to take possession of the equipage of the Great Moghol; causing it to be proclaimed in the camp, that every one might retire without fear of being stopped or insulted. He also sent his master of the ordinance^a, together with the officer who makes seizures^a, each with five hundred horse, to seize all the ordinance and implements of war belonging to the emperor, and the lords of his court. He required moreover that Mahomed Shah, with his son Sultan Achmed, and his empress Malika Al Zumani^b, with their domestics, should repair to his camp: accordingly a royal tent was prepared for them in front of his own, and a thousand Persian soldiers were appointed as their guard.

In the mean while, Nadir Shah dispatched his lieutenant Tæhmas Khan to Dehlie, with four thousand horse, to take possession of the castle. Saadit Khan was charged with the care of the city, together with the houses and effects of the inhabitants; strict directions were also given him that no injury should be done to any of them. This general on his arrival published the Shah's orders, adding, that none of the citizens should dare to molest the Persians. The governor of the castle being informed of what had passed on the plains of Karnal, made no scruple to pay an implicit obedience to the summons of Nadir's lieutenant, and admitted him, together with all his troops. The palace was also prepared for the reception of the Persian monarch. All the valuable effects were sealed up, and a list prepared of the Omras, and all the wealthy inhabitants of the city.

Nadir being master of all the jewels and of the military chests of the Indian camp at Karnal, gave a gratuity of three months pay to every soldier in his army. He then made choice of two hundred pieces of cannon, with their carriages, out of the Indian ordinance, and sent them with other effects under a strong convoy to Cabul.

^a Towpchi Bashi.^a Næssackhchi Bashi.^b This word signifies the queen of the times.

C H A P. LVIII.

March of the Persian and Indian armies from Karnal to Dehlie. Nadir's entrance into Dehlie. Saadit Khan destroys himself. Massacre of Dehlie. Nadir's conduct after the massacre.

THIS disposition being made, Nadir began his march towards Dehlie. His advanced guard^c consisted of four thousand men, who served to escort his harram; twenty thousand of his best cavalry guarded them at a proper distance. About two miles behind was Mahommed Shah, attended by fifty of his principal courtiers, and escorted by twelve thousand Persians. The Indian lords, at the head of their respective troops, marched at the distance of a mile from each other, having great bodies of the Persian army between them. Nadir himself brought up the rear, with the gros of his army; the whole composed a number of near three hundred and fifty thousand men^d, who covered near twelve miles in length, and three in breadth.

In this manner they proceeded five days march, till they came to Sonput. This place, together with Paniput, and several villages, were plundered by the Persians, as they marched along. From Sonput they advanced to Nirela, and the next day^e in the evening they arrived at the gardens of Shalimar. Nadir Shah declined going into the city in the night, as well on account of the safety of his person, as the regard to his state. He ordered Mahommed, the Great Moghol, seated in a royal litter, and preceded by his standards, with two hundred of the servants of his court, to march forward into the city. These were convoyed by four thousand Persian horse, who accompanied the Indian monarch to his apartment^f.

Nadir encamped with his forces without the gates. The next morning he marched with great circumspection through the city to the castle^g, attended by a body of twenty thousand

^c Kouruck. See Vol. I. Chap. XXXVII.

^d Before the late engagement the Indian army alone was near this number, including all their attendants; but a great part of these had been dispersed, and numbers of them killed.

^e The 7th of March.

^f This they call the Aeysh Mahl, which signifies the place of joy.

^g Castle is used synonymously for castle, citadel, or palace, viz. place of defence.

sand men. Mahommed Shah had already given notice to the inhabitants, when the Persian conqueror was to enter the city^a; ordering that all the houses and shops should be shut, and according to the awful respect shewn to eastern kings, that no person should presume to appear in the streets. This order was executed with great exactness; for of the vast number of inhabitants, there were no spectators of his triumphant entry: a mournful silence reigned throughout the city, as if it presaged some dreadful calamity.

Nadir having taken possession of the castle, was immediately attended by Mahommed Shah, towards whom he behaved with great civility. He distributed his troops into their quarters, and took all the necessary measures that due obedience should be paid to his orders, till the articles of peace were regulated with Nizam Al Muluck. In the mean while, he enjoined his Næssakhchiⁱ in the strictest manner, that whoever presumed to injure any of the natives, should be punished with the severest bastonading, or with the loss of their ears or nose, according to the nature of their offence.

The Persians, however polite in their manners, are but rude in their apparel and customs, compared with the delicacy of the Indians. In Nadir's army were also many Tartars, whose rough and savage aspects made such impressions on the Indians, that they avoided as much as possible all communication with them.

Saadit Khan, who seems to have been a man of warm passions, and of an inconstant disposition, was now as forward to recommend himself to his new master Nadir, as he had been ambitious at Karnal, of exerting himself in the defence of his true sovereign. He went out to the gardens of Shalimar to meet Nadir Shah, and accompanied him till he alighted at the palace of Dehlie. This lord had flattered himself with hopes of being admitted to a private audience, in which it was presumed he intended to recommend certain measures for the interest of the Persian king. Nadir, who had always distinguished himself for his penetration, spoke with great harshness to him, and demanded why he had not begun collecting the subsidies.

This reproof touched Saadit Khan to the heart; his jealousy was fired, and he concluded that Nizam Al Muluck had done him some ill office. Under this anxiety of thought, it is probable the remembrance of his infidelity recoiled upon him.

^a This was the 9th of March.

ⁱ These are the order of soldiers who are charged with the punishment of offences, as already mentiond.

him. He knew that to be suspected by a prince of such a temper as Nadir, was but a remove from ruin. Under these circumstances he retired; and despair drove him to the fatal expedient of taking poison.

Such is oftentimes the fate of men who swerve from the paths of honour, and bewilder themselves in the mazes of iniquity. Those principles which intice them to forsake the interest of their country, in order to gratify a private passion or resentment, hardly ever support them under a change of fortune, or the pressure of calamities.

What had passed on the plains of Karnal, and the havoc created by the sword and famine, was but a prelude to the distress which heaven permitted to fall upon the unfortunate inhabitants of Dehlie. The next day ^k after Nadir's arrival, was a feast of sacrifice ^l with the Indians, and the new-year's-day of the Persians. Nadir's lieutenant, Tæhmas Khan, sent several Persian horsemen of the Næssickhchi to the granaries ^m, ordering them to be opened, and the price of corn to be fixed. This not being done to the satisfaction of the proprietors, occasioned the assembling a mob. Sayd Neaz Khan, and several other persons of distinction, put themselves at their head, and killed the Persian horsemen.

After this unwarrantable act, a report was soon spread that Nadir Shah was slain ⁿ; upon which the tumult increased. All idle persons and men of desperate fortunes joined them, and marched towards the castle. A party of Persian horse, which was posted near the entrance, were forced to retire with some loss. In the mean while, several Persians whom Sayd Neaz Khan had taken as a safe-guard to his house, were treacherously shut up in a room, and burnt alive. The soldiers who were lodged in the palace of the deceased Devran Khan, and other great houses and caravanse-rais, were obliged to retreat to their quarters, and remain under arms the whole night. The cannon and harquebusses on the ramparts of the castle, as well as those in the houses occupied by the Persians, were discharged at the mob, but without quelling the insurrection.

The

^k The 10th of March.

^l Eid Zoha.

^m These are called Pahr Gunjh.

ⁿ These people seem to have been in the same circumstances of delusion as the Persians, in their rebellion five years afterwards at Astrabad, who first took arms, and then flattered themselves, and even reported, that Nadir Shah was dead.

The next morning Nadir, at the head of a strong party of his troops issued out of the palace, with an intention to suppress the tumult. Whether the discovery of the dead bodies of several of his soldiers, fired him with the desperate resolution of ordering the inhabitants to be massacred, does not clearly appear^o. If we may judge from his natural cruelty and insatiable avarice, it is not unreasonable to believe, that he at once delivered up the city, without any limitation, to slaughter and pillage. His orders were in an instant obeyed: a place taken by storm never exhibited a greater scene of horror. The Persian soldiers having spread themselves, broke open houses and palaces, slaughtering with an unbridled fury, with very little distinction of age or sex. This bloody scene extended above six miles^p.

Many who had fled from the neighbouring country to take refuge in the city, assembled in a body to defend their lives; these were joined by jewellers, money-changers, and rich shop-keepers. The Physician of the court put himself at their head, and despair supplied the place of strength and resolution. These unhappy people fought bravely for some time, but being so little accustomed to the use of arms, they had only the satisfaction of dying sword in hand.

Lutf Ali Khan conducted this bloody business in one quarter of the town: Sirbullind Khan, an Indian lord, whose reputation and venerable aspect had charms not to be resisted, rushing from his palace, prostrated himself before the Persian general, and represented that the inhabitants of that part of the city were innocent; and begging for their lives, he offered to pay a large ransom, which was accepted, and the slaughter ceased.

In the mean time Nizam Al Muluck was stung with remorse at the sight of so sad a spectacle, and conscious of his guilt, in being in some measure the occasion of it^q, went and threw himself at Nadir's feet, intreating his mercy, for the unfortunate remains of so flourishing a city. After a torrent of reproaches, Nadir gave orders for the recall of his soldiers.

This carnage lasted from eight in the morning till three in the afternoon, about four hundred of the Persians were killed,

I i 4

but

^o Mr. Frazer, who has given the authorities for most of the transactions in Dehlie, says, that the soldiers were at first ordered not to do any harm to the innocent. But soldiers are bad judges in such cases.

^p Dehlie is represented to be a very large city.

^q Because of his treasonable correspondence, which is supposed to have been a motive to the invasion.

but of the citizens not less than one hundred and ten thousand. All the jewellers and goldsmiths shops were plundered, and many of them set on fire. Private houses had no better fortune: and the palaces of the great partook of the common ruin. Next morning the inhabitants were ordered, under the severest penalties, to bury their dead. These unhappy people had not even time to distinguish the Mahomedans from the Pagans: the latter, however abominable to Mussulmen, even after death, were either tumbled into one common grave, or consumed together in funeral piles, after the manner of the Pagans.

As to those who were shut up in houses, numbers of their bodies were not brought out for burial till after Nadir's departure: what horrid spectacles they were then, the reflection is shocking to humanity. Many who were jealous of their honour killed their wives, and then committed murder on themselves. Numbers were burnt in their houses, especially women and children; nor did the sword spare even the infant at his mother's breast. Horror and despair had plunged the inhabitants into such distress, that near ten thousand women threw themselves into wells; of these, some were afterwards taken out alive^r.

When the slaughter began, the mob who had been the apparent occasion of it disappeared, and left the innocent to suffer. The leading people of this fatal tumult had been so infatuated, as to think that a mob might effect what the imperial army of India had hardly any chance of executing: several of these were taken prisoners, among whom was Sayd Neaz Khan: Nizam Al Muluck and the visier pleaded hard for him, but in vain; Nadir ordered his belly to be ripped open, and in this deplorable manner he expired.

The prisoners brought before the Persian king amounted to several thousands; of these the greatest part were women, of whom many, contrary to the discipline he had established, and contrary to the sacred rights of humanity, had upon this occasion suffered the most infamous treatment. Nadir ordered them to be conducted to their respective houses, where they retired in circumstances of the deepest distress.

The amount of the loss in houses, effects and riches, in so rich a city, must have been very considerable: but in such
a con-

^r One remarkable incident happened of a certain man who burnt twenty women of his family; and then finding that the soldiers had missed his house, went out to acquaint them he had large effects; these the soldiers took, but left him unhurt, upon which he murdered himself.

a confusion, it is probable many valuable things were lost. Large sums were brought into Nadir's treasury; and the booty which the Persian soldiers reserved to themselves, as afterwards appeared, was very important.

Before the massacre at Dehlie, a party of the Persian forces had been sent to seize the cannon at the palace of an Indian lord. These had been also treacherously set upon and murdered, by a body of Tartar Moghols^c. Nadir being informed of this accident, sent a large detachment, who fell upon those people and slaughtered near six thousand of them. The Persians brought away the ordinance, together with three hundred persons of the chief rank among them. Nadir caused the heads of these to be immediately struck off, and their bodies to be thrown into the Rete^e.

After this, a proclamation was made, that all persons should pursue their employments, and that none of the Persian soldiers should hurt or molest them. To prevent the ordinary consequences of such calamities, Nadir gave orders that the granaries should be sealed up^d, and guards set over them. He also commanded several parties of cavalry to invest the city, that no person might go out of it without a particular license. Many whom hunger and misery induced to leave this dreadful scene, were arrested by the Persian guards, who cut off their ears or noses.

So severe a conduct was soon followed by the distress of many thousands, who had been plundered of their money and effects; for provisions were become excessive dear. The people who were not the proper inhabitants of the city applied to Nadir Shah, chusing rather to die by a speedy effect of his anger, than to perish more slowly with hunger. These went to him in a body, and in tears of anguish and distress prostrated themselves, and begged for bread. Even the cruel Nadir was touched with their misfortunes, and gave them liberty of retiring to Ferid-Abad, in order to buy provisions.

^c These are called Moghol Poura.

^d The river of Dehlie.

^e In Persia as well as Russia, the sealing up doors by means of a bit of string with some bees-wax impressed with a seal, is looked upon more sacred than any lock.

C H A P. LIX.

*Male administration of Riza Kouli Myrza, regent of Persia.
 Rebellion of the Arabs against the Persian government.
 Conduct of the Persian ambassador at Constantinople.*

DURING this scene of misery and devastation at Dehlie, Persia still groaned under a tyrannical government. Riza Kouli Myrza the regent, by practising all the arts of cruelty and extortion, soon incurred the hatred of the people. In order to cover his rapacious avarice, he took the specious name of a merchant: thus he arbitrarily monopolized the raw silk on his own terms, and obliged the manufacturers to take it of him again at the price he was pleased to impose. In the vanity of his heart he wrote to his father, to acquaint him that he had gained a million five hundred thousand crowns ^w, without doing wrong to any man. Nadir, jealous of such extraordinary abilities in his son, desired him to explain himself. Riza Kouli answered, that he had turned merchant, and obtained it by commerce, of which he sent him a certificate ^x.

The Shah, who was not to be easily imposed on, represented to him the injurious consequences of such proceedings; that if he had so great a passion for trade, a fishery ^y should be appointed him, from whence he might draw a considerable profit, without invading any property, or diminishing the advantages which belonged to fair traders, by whom nations are enriched. Upon the whole, he was so much displeased at his son's administration, that he sent a decree, confirming all governors and magistrates in their posts, till he should return from India. This incident was so contumelious a reproach to the prince, that it laid the foundation of his rebellion, as we shall have occasion to relate.

The Persians rejoiced at the success of their king over the Indian monarch; and the value of the riches taken from that prince

^w 750,000.

^x This certificate of his fair-dealing was indeed testified by the merchants of Reshd, but it was obtained by compulsive means, through the interposition of his principal agent Hadghee Sadduk.

^y At a time when the success of the herring-fishery seems to be suspected by many, it may be worth while to reflect on this advice of Nadir Shah; his notion seems to arise from reason and nature, without discourse or argument; for fish is so small an article of the food of the Persians, that it seems strange that Nadir should stumble on the thought.

prince were represented as inestimable. What tended to flatter them into the hopes of Halcyon days, was the arrival of a messenger, who brought a decree^a from Nadir Shah, which exempted them from taxes for a whole year, to commence from the tenth of March. The officers, who had begun to collect the money, were ordered to refund; which they performed accordingly.

Amidst all these rapid victories, Persia was not free from alarms. Some of her subjects in the south took the advantage of the Shah's absence, and threw off their yoke. Nadir had ordered seven of his ships to be prepared in the Persian gulph, for some expedition which he had meditated^a: the Persian commander took this occasion to seize the barks belonging to the Houles, a tribe of Arabs, and would not permit any of them to cross the streight of Ormus. This gave occasion for a revolt, in which the Persian ships were taken by these Arabians, and several of them burnt.

Taghi Khan, the governor of Shiras, soon after embarked a great number of men in small vessels^b, and went to chastise the rebels. In the mean time the Mascats, another tribe of the Arabs, fitted out several ships, apprehending a visit from the Persians. Their fears were soon removed, for the Houles were an over-match for their enemies: the Persian forces were repulsed, with the loss of near two thousand of their men. This event however encouraged the Imam of Mascat, to accept the offer of a defensive alliance with the Houles, in order to support their mutual liberty, against all attempts of the Persians.

But the greatest uneasiness was created by the Turks. Nadir, notwithstanding his great distance, endeavoured to possess them with the terror of his arms; that they might not take advantage of his absence to make a peace with the Russians and invade Persia. He sent two ambassadors to them from Kandahar, of whom the last, Mahommed Riza Khan, arrived at Constantinople in November last year; and in the beginning of the next Month was admitted to an audience of the grand signior. The Khan assured his highness in the most elegant

^a This is called a Ragam. Firman, which is a name given it by some, I imagine to be more proper to India.

^a It is said they were intended to sail round, and go up the Indus, to carry troops to join the army, which was on the march to India; how practicable this might be, I cannot determine. We are told Alexander came down the Indus.

^b Tarranquins.

^a The chief of the Arabians on the opposite side of the gulph.

elegant and exalted terms, “ That his master, the Shah, “ had the greatest desire to live in perfect amity with him ; “ but that the means of doing this was to yield up Diarbekir “ in the same condition it was in during its subjection to the “ Persian empire ^d. He also pretended to the Upper Arme- “ nia : and further insisted that the grand signior should re- “ nounce his alliance with the Great Moghol ; that the new “ fortifications made at Bagdat, since the provisional treaty “ of peace, concluded three years before, should be demo- “ lished ; and that the Persian caravans should have every “ where a free passage in the dominions of the Ottoman em- “ pire.”

These demands appearing capricious as well as insolent; the Turkish ministers, though they dreaded a war with Persia, seemed by no means disposed to comply with them ; on the contrary, they declared that the grand signior would make a peace with the emperor of the Romans, and the empress of Russia, and engage in a fresh war with Persia, rather than submit to such dishonourable conditions. What added to the distress of the port, was the rebellion of Sare Ben Og-lou in Natolia. Nadir might flatter himself into a belief of selling his friendship for some very valuable consideration ; but his interest was to keep the Turks deeply engaged in a war with Russia ; that so he might find them the more weakened, when he should return to fill up the measure of his victories over them.

Nadir also sent an ambassador to the court of St. Petersburg, with which he had a more natural interest : that court was also very sensible how little his friendship was to be depended on ; however, it was some satisfaction that he was very far from having entered into any close connexion with the Turks, tho’ he was not engaged in a war with them.

^d This country was formerly part of Mesopotamia, and the ancient boundary of the kingdom of Assyria.

C H A P. LX.

Nadir gives his soldiers a gratuity. Contribution of Audih brought to Dehlie. Sirbullind Khan appointed chief collector of the contribution. His declaration to Nizam al Muluck. Barbarous treatment of the Indians in collecting the contributions. The value of the treasure collected.

WE return now to India, to see how the mighty ravager conducted himself after spilling so much innocent blood: we shall find that his avarice was in no respects inferior to his cruelty. These indeed are vices twin-born from the regions of darkness, and increase in malignity in proportion to the power by which they are supported.

Nadir being now master of vast treasures, paid his army their arrears^e, and in order to encourage them to bring in their plunder, he added a gratuity also. These payments were made in his own coin, which was struck upon this occasion, with this inscription:

“Nadir the master of fortune, and the king of kings, is
“the most powerful prince of the earth.”

The reverse was:

“May God perpetuate his reign.”

The great business was the collection of those vast sums, which Nadir exacted of the Great Moghol and his subjects. Tæhmas Khan had been charged to watch over the conduct of Saadit Khan. This Indian general^e had accepted the commission of compelling his country-men to deliver up their riches, agreeably to the respective quotas to be levied on them: upon his decease, his nephew, Mahommed Khan, was called upon to deliver in an account of his uncle's effects, which
amounted

^e Twelve months pay for 140,000 men, at the ordinary computation is 3,400,000*l.* but it is probable that the Riches he found at Cabul, enabled him to pay his army on the occasion of his taking that place; and consequently he did not disburse near so large a sum on this occasion.

^e I use the terms general and lord as words that are familiar and emphatical, and convey, I think, a stronger idea than the Indian names. It may however be proper to remark, that Nabob or Navob is the ordinary title given the Omras or Indian lords who are governors; Naib signifies a deputy or viceroy, such as Saadit Khan we may suppose was in Audih.

amounted to a million sterling^f. Great part of this was brought from his government, under an escort of a thousand Persian horse : but the sum was two hundred and fifty thousand pounds short of what Saadit Khan had engaged to pay.

Sirbullind Khan, already mentioned as the person by whose intercession the massacre was stopt in his quarter, though poor, was much respected : the corruptions of the court had not tainted his integrity. Nadir excused him from paying any tax himself, as knowing his inability ; but these very reasons rendered him worthy of the greatest trust ; hence he was appointed to collect from other people the free gift^g, and contribution^h. His age and infirmities in some measure obstructed his vigilance : Nadir therefore acquainted him, that if he meant to avoid the weight of his anger, he would do well to exert himself. Two hundred soldiers were assigned him as a guard in the execution of this office. He was also charged to oblige all persons in public employmentⁱ, to produce all the horses, camels, and elephants belonging to the crown, that proper choice might be made of them for the use of the Persian army.

This Khan saw to what extremities he must reduce the people in the execution of this dangerous commission : it is some consolation however to honest men under such circumstances, that they may alleviate a misfortune, and execute their charge with humanity ; when a person of a different character would aggravate the evil, and render it still a heavier weight to the calamitous.

Sirbullind Khan saw to what extremities he must reduce the inhabitants in the execution of this dangerous commission, but there was no remedy ; Tæhmas Khan and Mustapha Khan^k, pressed him to enter upon the office assigned him. This old man, in the fulness of his heart, addressing himself to Nizam al Muluck, who was then present, spoke to this effect : “ I have long foreseen the misfortune which has
“ overtaken us ; I often represented to the emperor the dan-
“ ger of an easy security, and desired him to send a trusty
“ ambassador with large presents into Persia, to divert the
“ storm which was breaking out on that side. We might
“ have

^f Eighty lacks of rupees, or one million sterling. The sum promised was a crore or 100 lacks, equal to 1,250,000 *l*.

^g This they call the Peishcush.

^h This is called the Beavra, or forced contribution.

ⁱ Mansubdars.

^k This was the man to whom I was under such singular obligations in the camp of Nadir Shah in March 1744.

“ have appeased the resentment of the Shah, and lived with him in friendship : but the courtiers would not listen to my advice ; they imagined that what I said was only with a view to some private interest ; and whilst they neglected to second my counsel, they proposed no kind of expedient to avert the impending danger : at length, we see to what a calamitous issue things are reduced. For my own part, had I been possessed of money, I would have sent it all to Kandahar, rather than have given any provocation to the Shah to have made so extraordinary an expedition. However, we have now no remedy ; we must raise the immense sum of twenty crores¹, if the money is to be found, which God only can tell whether it be possible to raise under the present distressed condition of the capital.”

Nizam al Muluck made no reply to this speech. In whatever degree he was answerable for the misfortune, he saw too plainly the mistake he had committed, as the sum demanded of himself was no less than one crore and a half^m. He, together with the visier and Devran Khan, had received one croreⁿ, which had been issued out of the royal treasury for the military chest, when they marched against the Persians : of the two former Nadir demanded an account of this sum ; he also ordered them to send to their respective governments for all the treasure, belonging either to themselves or the crown.

Nizam al Muluck represented, that when he left Deccan, he established his son as his deputy, giving him possession of all his effects ; that all the world knew his son had refused to deliver up his government, and was no longer in his power ; that Nadir himself was only capable of reducing him and the rebellious princes of Deccan.

This answer, which was in some degree true, served to divert the Shah from pursuing a point in its nature hardly practicable. It was very plain he thought it unsafe to penetrate deeper into the country, lest he should never get out of it again. Kummir O'Din Khan, the visier, was treated with greater severity. He endeavoured to elude the payment of the large contribution demanded of him ; Nadir therefore caused him to be exposed openly to the sun, which

is

¹ Twenty five millions of pounds. This was the sum which Nizam al Muluck after the battle of Karnal had agreed to pay the Shah, exclusive of the jewels, gold, plate, and other rich goods belonging to the emperor and the lords of his court.

^m 1,870,000 l.

ⁿ 1,250,000 l.

is reckoned a punishment contumelious as well as painful, and in that country dangerous to the health. At length he extorted from him a whole crore of rupees^o, besides a great value in precious stones and elephants. His secretary, who was also a man of fortune, was taxed in a large sum, and delivered to Sirbullind Khan, in order to be tortured if he did not pay it; however, he prevented this persecution by a dose of poison.

A sum of money was now issued out of the treasury for the charge of fifty horsemen, who were ordered to march to Bengal, with directions to the governor to send seven crores of rupees^p. The Vakeel^q of that kingdom, who was then present at Dehlie, said that so much money would load a string of waggons to reach from thence to the capital. Being severely beaten for his sarcasm, he went home, and revenged himself by taking poison together with his whole family.

The Indians of distinction seem to have a great sensibility of such indignities. The gentler treatment to which they had been accustomed, gave them very different impressions from what the Persians received in the like circumstances.

It is not easy to conceive with what rigour these contributions were levied; and what numbers destroyed themselves with their own hands, to be delivered from the tortures and punishments with which they were threatened. No barbarities were left unpractised: the tax imposed was strictly exacted, tho' in the computation of the respective abilities of the inhabitants, numerous mistakes were made; besides, as there were no purchasers of their effects, except the Persians, hardly a quarter of their value was paid. The consequence of this was, that many left their effects and their families at the mercy of the Persians, and made their escape to Acbar Abad. Here the governor received them, determined to resist any of the flying parties who should appear in his district; for which purpose he appointed six thousand horse to protect those who fled to him for shelter.

Mean while all the inhabitants of any consideration were obliged to declare under their hand-writing, what money and effects they were possessed of; that if it should be afterwards found they had concealed any thing, they might be punished with

^o 1,250,000 l.

^p 8,750,000 l. I never heard that he received any money from thence, tho' the province was alarmed. The riches of Dehlie seemed to fill up the measure of his avarice, great as it was.

^q The lieutenant governor.

with the utmost severity; and in this process a suspicion was often deemed a proof.

The commissioners appointed for the collection sat every day, from sun-rise till evening, during which time there was very little respect shewn to persons. At length, about the middle of April, the sum of four crores^r was extorted from the merchants and common people. In the royal treasuries were found three crores^t of money; but in the inward vaults, which had been shut during many reigns, they discovered a much larger value^t. Nor must we forget to mention the peacock throne, which was rich in jewels, and valued at a prodigious sum. The whole of the treasure amassed upon this occasion, is estimated as follows:

	Crores.	£.
Jewels taken from the Great Moghol and the Indian lords — — —	25	— 31,250,000
The peacock throne, with nine others, also several weapons and utensils all garnished with precious stones —	9	— 11,250,000
Gold and silver plate, and money, which Nadir melted down into large ingots	30	— 37,500,000
To these we may add the rich manufac- tures of many kinds — — —	2	— 2,500,000
Cannon, warlike stores, furniture, and other valuable commodities —	4	— 5,000,000

^r 5,000,000 £.

^t 3,750,000 £.

^t The different relations we have had of this extraordinary rapine, are for the most part upon the marvellous; and several writers have suffered their imaginations to travel much faster than their judgment. The most probable account values these riches at seventy millions sterling. I could never come to the bottom of the matter in Persia. The Persians talked only of heaps of treasure, and thousands of camels, and mules loaded with gold and silver and precious stones. Mr. Frazer's account, which I adopt, makes it seventy crores, which seems to be the highest calculation that the nature of the thing will warrant; this is equal to eighty seven millions five hundred thousand pounds of our money. Of this sum, thirty seven millions five hundred thousand pounds is computed in gold and silver.

C H A P. LXI.

Nadir marries his second son to the niece of Mahommed Shah. The presents he makes to that prince and the Indian lords. The Great Moghol's cession of all the country on the west of the Indus. Nadir's advice to that prince. He begins his march from Dehlie, and musters his army. Value of the damage done the Indians.

WHILST Nadir was thus glutting himself with treasures, he affected to establish a lasting friendship with the Great Moghol. With this view he demanded Cambarche, the niece of that prince, in marriage for his second son Nefr Ali Myrza. Their nuptials were accordingly consummated on the 27th of March, with some appearances of that satisfaction which such alliances generally create in the families of princes. Mahommed Shah was in no circumstances to make his niece presents suitable to his own rank, or her condition; however, he sent her fifty thousand rupees in money ^d, and as much in jewels. Nadir himself added to these the value of five hundred thousand rupees in jewels ^w.

It might be presumed that this alliance was calculated for political ends, either to preserve his authority over the Indians, or to retain some part of his conquest by right of dowry to the young princes: but this was not the case. Nadir knew that he could not support his sovereignty over so vast a country, and govern a people so different in manners, tho' of a genius milder and more tractable than the Persians ^z, by any authority but what was derived from the sword. So far then as such authority could be extended, he might reasonably hope to support his conquest, and farther than this, alliances by marriage could be of no signification. Besides, the marriages of Mahomedan princes, who take several wives, ought to be considered in a different light from those of christian kings; tho' it is a means sometimes used among them, as well as christians, to consolidate their friendships.

Perhaps Nadir took this occasion to make the first mention of his desire that the province of Cabul, with all the country

^d 6,250 l.

^w Five lacks, or 62,500 l.

^z The Persians are polite and gentle in their deportment, and submissive to their superiors; but their taste for arms, and their repugnance to be ruled by a tyrant and usurper, has been proved sufficiently.

try on the western banks of the Indus, from the fort of Attok, should be yielded to him. And what difficulty could the trembling monarch of Hindostan make, to abandon his right to those provinces, whilst he found himself in the hands of a conqueror, who considered it as an act of clemency to grant him even his life?

During these transactions in Dehlie, the Persians marauded for thirty or forty miles round the capital, plundering the villages, laying waste the fields, and killing the inhabitants who resisted. Numbers of these were left without any provender for their cattle, which added greatly to their distress.

Nadir, who was determined that due obedience should be paid to all his decrees, remembered that which related to the conformity of the Schias and Sunnis. The fast and repentance, in commemoration of the death of Imam Hassan, and Imam Hussein^y, falling out in the month of March, he caused it to be proclaimed, that no person whatever, either of his own army, or of the subjects of the Great Moghol, should presume to mention the words Tazia^z or Matim^a: This however did not hinder, but that some of his own soldiers, in the camp without the city, beat their breasts, and made lamentations according to their former custom; for which they were severely punished.

The scene was now drawing near a close: the grandeur of a great prince and a conqueror called on Nadir for some acts of generosity. Those Indian lords, who had been employed in using their influence and authority to collect the vast treasures he had amassed, were intitled to some regard, tho' it were but a mark of honour.

For these, forty-two presents^b were provided, consisting each of three, four, or five pieces of gold or silver stuffs, according to their respective ranks. Those appointed for Nizam al Muluck, Sirbullind Khan, the great visier, Kummir O'Din Khan^c, and Mahommied Khan Bungush, an Indian

K k 2

dian

^y The two sons of Ali often mentioned.

^z Signifies mourning.

^a Death.

^b These are called Khalaet, which properly signifies perfect or accomplished; a robe of honour given by the king. See Vol. II. Chap. XVIII.

^c Signifies the moon of religion. They tell a remarkable story of this person, with relation to his son Bedreddin Khan, who disappeared at Karnal, and it was reasonable to presume fell in the field of battle. Soon after this time, the Rajah of Perver met a young man in the habit of a Dervish, whom he took to be Bedreddin

dian general, who had also been of great service to the Persian monarch, were much more considerable, consisting of three rich vestments, a turbant, with a Persian sabre and knife, the handles of which were mounted with gold and enameled. This ceremony was performed on the first of May, and all the Omras were ordered to attend at the general divan, where Mahommed Shah their own sovereign was present: they were also entertained with the morning's repast^d.

Upon

Bedreddin Khan, whose person was well known to him. The Rajah having a great friendship for the visier, sent an express to court, to inform that minister of the joyful news that his son was found. In the mean while, the young man was received by the Rajah with the utmost politeness and affection, and clothed in the richest manner, agreeable to his supposed quality. The visier was transported with joy at the news, and received the compliments of his friends upon this happy occasion. Orders were dispatched immediately to the Rajah, to send the supposed son to court; a rich palankin was prepared, and mounted on an elephant, and the young man was conveyed with great pomp by five hundred horse as far as Acbarabad, where he was received with great marks of distinction by the soldiers and domestics, whom the visier had sent to meet him. From thence he was conducted to the capital. The young man was no sooner arrived there, than the visier received him with open arms, and shed over him the tears of joy and paternal affection: the resemblance was so great, that the visier entertained not the least jealousy, but imagined his supposed son jested, when he declared in the same manner he had done to the Rajah, that he was not Bedreddin Khan. The delusion was carried so far, that he was introduced to the harram, and presented to his supposed mother. His countenance, his stature, his voice, and air, persuaded this lady also that he was her son; but as he still persisted that he was not, her curiosity induced her to examine his body, as Bedreddin Khan had a mark in a particular place. What pen can describe her sorrow and confusion, when she discover'd that he was not her son! The indignity of a stranger being brought to her apartment aggravated the misfortune; whilst the young man complained of their incredulity, by compelling him to submit to such an extremity. Under these circumstances, the visier offered to adopt him as his son, and by that means at once wipe off the stain, and enjoy some part of the pleasures of a father, in the society of one who so much resembled his real son. But neither was this practicable, for the true father of this young man, who thought he had lost him, was no sooner informed of the adventure, than he reclaimed his son, with the joy that is natural to a tender parent.

^d This we may call either breakfast or dinner, as their custom is not to eat till about 11 o'clock, after which the Persians only eat once more in the day. See Vol. I. Chap. XXXIII.

Upon this occasion, the Great Moghol himself received marks of friendship of the Persian monarch, viz. a crown, a bracelet ^e, a fillet ^f, and a girdle richly set with jewels. To these were added an enamelled dagger ^g, and two swords, the handles of which were set with jewels. Nadir Shah with his own hand placed the crown on the Great Moghol's head, as if he meant to signify, that to his arm the Indian monarch was indebted for his dominions. He also declared with an imperious air, which at once argued his contempt of the Indians, and the most lofty conceit of his own power, that if the lords of the court were omiffive in their duty, he would call them to severe account; that they ought to consider him always as near, since he could be with them in forty days from Kandahar.

Whether any particular ceremony was performed upon the Moghol's yielding up the Indian dominions which Nadir claimed, does not appear; but this seems to be the proper place to mention the extraordinary cession made to the Persian king, which was as follows:

“ May God perpetuate the reign of Nadir Shah, who
 “ is exalted as Saturn ^h, in glory like Mars ⁱ, in pomp like
 “ Alexander ^k, sovereign of the kings of the earth; the sha-
 K k 3 “ dow

^e Which the Indians call Bazoubund.

^f This they call a Sirpeach, which is wore round the turbant: persons of great distinction generally have them set with precious stones.

^g Which the Indians call Cuttarri.

^h Saturn is 87,000 miles distant from the earth; hence, tho' it appears so small, astronomers mention it as twenty times the diameter of the earth. The ring, which surrounds his middle like an arch, contains forty-five diameters of the earth. How does the mind labour to reach the vast expanse; yet is not this more to infinite space than a moment to eternity!

ⁱ There is also a comparison made with Mars, viz. “ impetuous as the god of war:” but this seems to be dropping the figure with regard to Mars as a planet. Being placed between Jupiter and the sun, it might imply power and glory. It is true, a more apt meaning might have been cloaked, if the Indian or Persian astrologers agreed with those of Europe, with regard to the appearances of Mars, with a ruddy troubled light, supposed to be encompassed with a cloudy atmosphere; if they had dared under the notion of a panegyric to tell a bold truth.

^k Some writers have translated this, “ the second Alexander;” and from thence make many remarks on the supposed model which Nadir followed, though his motives seem to have been very different from that of the Grecian hero.

“dow of the Almighty, and the refuge of Islam¹, whose
“court is the heavens^m.”

“The ministersⁿ of the sultan, who is merciful, and the
“emperor, who is august, formerly sent ambassadors to us
“to treat of certain demands, with which it was our pur-
“pose to comply. The ambassador Mahommed Khan
“Turkuman, not long since arrived here from Kandahar
“to remind us thereof; but our ministers having delayed
“the ambassador, and postponed answering the letters of his
“sublime majesty, it at length produced such a misunder-
“standing between us, that his victorious army came into
“Hindoستان. We encountered in the fields of Karnal,
“where victory arose in the east of his undecending fortune.

“As his sublime majesty is mighty as Jushheid^o, the
“greatest of the Turkumans, and the source of goodness as
“well as valour; relying on his honour, we had the satisfac-
“tion of an interview, and enjoyed the unmixed delights of his
“heavenly company. After this we came together to Sha-
“jehanabad^p, where all the jewels and treasures of the em-
“perors of Hindoستان^q were presented to him: and, in com-
“pliance with our request, his sublime majesty was graci-
“ously pleased to accept of some of them.

“But in regard to the illustrious family of Jurghin^r, and
“the honour he professes for the original tree of Turkan^r,
“out of the greatness of his soul, and the overflowings of
“his humanity, he has been pleased to restore to us the
“crown and gem of Hindoستان.

“In consideration of this act of generosity, which no fa-
“ther has ever shewn to a son, nor any brother to a bro-
“ther, we make over to him all the countries to the west
“of

¹ By this is meant the true faith.

^m It is hard to say which of these three compliments is the
greatest bombast, or the most ill applied.

ⁿ As they often use the third person plural; when they speak
of princes, they also express an awful respect, not by ascribing
their actions to their ministers, but substituting the instrument for
the agent.

^o This was one of the antient kings of Persia, remarkable for
great power.

^p Dehlie.

^q India.

^r This word is sometimes wrote Gourgane; but they both
equally allude to Temur Beg or Tamerlane, of whom the Indian
emperors are descended.

^r This also I understand to allude to Tamerlane.

“ of the river Attok^t, and of that of Scind^u, and Nala
 “ Sunkra^w, which is a branch of the Scind. That is to
 “ say, Peishor with its territories ; the principality of Cabul
 “ and Gazna, Hazarijat, the mountainous residences of the
 “ Afghans, with the castles of Buckhor, Sunkor^x, and
 “ Khoudabad ; the passes, territories, and abodes of the
 “ Tchoukis and Ballouches, with the whole province of
 “ Tata : also the castle of Ram ; the towns of Chun, Su-
 “ mawali, and Ketra, with all the castles, towns, ports,
 “ villages, and open country, from the first rise of the river
 “ Attok, with all the country comprehended within its
 “ branches, till it empties itself into the sea at Nala Sunkra,
 “ These we freely give up to the dominion of the pow-
 “ erful sovereign of Persia, and from hence forward our
 “ officers and subjects shall evacuate the same, and resign
 “ the property and government to the Persian king, to be
 “ of disposed at his pleasure. We renounce all our right to
 “ command, countroul, or collect revenues, in any of those
 “ dominions. But the castle and town of Lohre Bender,
 “ with all the country to the eastward of the river Attok,
 “ and of the waters of the Scind, and Nala Sunkra, shall,
 “ as before, belong to the empire of Hindostan. Dated at
 “ Shajehanabad the fourth of Mohirrim, 1152^y.”

This acquisition of dominion was an object of no less consequence, than all the treasures of which Nadir robbed the Moghol, particularly the province of Peishor ; if we may judge from the great revenues which he drew from that conquest ; nor was there any other danger of his losing it, than what naturally arose from the circumstances of his own government. The seat of the Persian empire, which he had established in Khorasan, was also calculated for the support of his conquest, had providence permitted him to establish by the arts of peace, what he had thus acquired by the sword. But as the Great Moghol became a prey to Nadir by the fault of too great gentleness ; so Nadir's excess of severity

K k 4

necessarily

^t I have already observed that this is part of Indus.

^u Part of the country on the west of the Indus often goes under this denomination, as well as the Indus itself.

^w This is sometimes called Nale Sengure, which seems to be the island between the Indus and what De Lisle calls the river Dimtade.

^x This is sometimes wrote Sekir.

^y Dēhlie, the 2d of April, 1739.

necessarily rendered him odious, and consequently hastened his fall with a more prodigious ruin.

Nadir had now returned the Indian diadem to the legal possessor, seemingly with a much greater indifference, than Alexander restored to Porus, the kingdom which he had conquered from him, with an additional territory. Mahomed Shah was not indeed an object of jealousy, as he seemed no ways inclined to war, or to commence any future contest: whereas Porus signalized himself in military achievements. Alexander indeed abandoned India intirely; probably because he could not keep it, and therefore can claim the less merit: Nadir retained a considerable share of his conquest, on a presumption that he could keep it. Shall we say that honour or generosity was concerned in either case? Little more than what arises from the virtue which is passive, because there is no temptation or inclination to offend.

Nadir being now prepared to march back into his own country, took occasion to give a lesson of advice to the Great Moghol; and under the cloak of friendship, to recommend such a conduct as tended most to the security of their new conquest, which had been just yielded to him. It is said he spoke to this effect: “ You ought by all means to take possession of the lands assigned for the support of your governors^a, and pay each of them their appointments with ready money out of your treasuries. Let none of them keep any forces of their own: you will then have the less occasion for a numerous standing army; however, you ought to support a body of sixty thousand choice cavalry, at the annual expence of sixty rupees^b each. Every ten men ought to have one corporal^c, every ten corporals one captain^d, and every ten captains one commander of a thousand^d. Acquaint yourself with the country, family, and name of all your officers, with their respective merits and inclinations. Never suffer either them or the common
“ soldiers

^a These are called Jaguirs, or lands appointed for payment of the salaries of the respective governors, which naturally gives them a kind of sovereignty, by collecting the taxes, and converting them to their own use. The advice here seems to be very just.

^b Sixty rupees, or 7 *l.* 10*s.* is but 30 crowns of Persia, whereas Nadir's soldiers cost him 100 crowns, including officers. But servitude is cheaper in India.

^c Deh-Bashi.

^d Sudival.

^e Hazarri, sometimes called Mimbashi.

“ soldiers to be idle or inactive. When occasion requires, detach a sufficient number of your troops under the command of a brave, faithful, and experienced officer ; but when he has executed his business, recall him. By this means you will have the less to fear, with regard to the consequences of too great a power.

“ As to the great officers of your court, be careful in your choice of them, and do not prefer those who are artful, ambitious, or self-interested. Were I to chuse them, they would shew you very little respect in my absence ; but you may depend, if any of them prove rebellious, I will send to chastise them. If necessary, I can be with you myself in forty days from Kandahar*, and never reckon me far off.”

This advice seemed to be in some measure agreeable to Nadir's own maxims of government ; tho' the frontiers which he had to guard required so many forces, that he was often obliged to employ such commanders as he had soon reason to distrust. He recommended to Sirbullind Khan, Nizam al Muluck, and other Omras belonging to the court of Mahommed Shah, to be faithful to their master ; telling them, that a religious adherence to their duty to their own sovereign, would be their best security against his resentment.

The 4th of May he issued out orders for his army to march, and proclamation was made, that no subject of Mahommed Shah should presume, under pain of death to conceal any one belonging to his army. He also gave orders, that none of his officers or soldiers should carry with them any male or female slaves, except such as had been bought with money, and with the public consent of the parties ; and that, even women lawfully married to them, should not be taken away without their consent. Some of the officers used the most gentle entreaties, but none of the Indian women could be entirely prevailed on to leave their country ; Nadir therefore obliged these officers to send back the few women who had accompanied them out of the city. This rigor seemed to arise either from the regard which he always shewed to the freedom of that sex, as far as Mahomedan principles allow ; or from a fear lest these women should be a means of supporting a correspondence with the Indians, not consistent with his system of politics.

As soon as he arrived at the gardens of Shalimar, he ordered a muster of his army. Four hundred men being missing,

* The distance is computed between 7 and 800 miles.

sing, strict search was made after them; of these, sixty were found and brought to the camp. As a proof of the severity of his discipline, he caused their heads to be cut off instantly upon the field. This induced the Indians out of pure mercy to conceal the other deserters.

Nadir carried with him a hundred and thirty writers, among whom were several who understood the finances of the empire, of which he was particularly desirous of acquiring an entire knowledge. He also obliged three hundred masons and builders, two hundred smiths, two hundred carpenters, and one hundred stone-cutters, to engage in his service, in order to go into Persia. His intentions were to build a city after the model of Dehlie, a draught of which he carried with him. This new city was proposed to be called Nadir Abad †; which at the same time that it transmitted his own name to posterity, might remain a monument of his conquest in India, and of his victory obtained over the Great Moghol. He allowed these artificers large pay, and provided them with horses and other necessaries for their journey: he also agreed, that after the expiration of three years, they should be at liberty to return home. However this design might flatter his vanity, it was never carried into execution: part of these Indians deserted before they reached Lahor, and the continual wars in which he was afterwards engaged diverted the thought of this project, after his return into Persia.

Besides the jewels, gold, silver, and other valuables already mentioned, he took with him near three hundred^g elephants, ten thousand horses, and as many camels, of which many were loaded with spoil. Most of the gold and silver was melted into large ingots, and slung over the backs of camels, horses and mules. If we reckon one half part of the thirty crores^h already mentioned to be in gold, and the other in silver, according to the ordinary computation of loads, even for common journies in Persia, would require five thousand seven hundred camels, and two thousand and fifty

† The city of Nadir.

^g Some accounts say he took a thousand elephants, which seems to be much too great a number to have been collected, or to be of any use. These animals indeed carry large burthens; but except it be for artillery, and such like uses, camels, horses, and mules, answer the purpose better. This is a long lived animal, and yet I could never hear that there were such numbers in Persia; the number in the camp did not reach to thirty, and those which Nadir sent into Turkey and Russia did not exceed twenty.

^h 37,500,000 *l*.

fifty horses and mules¹. The manufactures, furniture, and warlike weapons, it may be presumed, would require a much greater number.

It is computed that the houses and goods destroyed by fire, and the fields which were laid waste, amounted to near twenty crores^k; we may therefore reckon upon the whole, that this Persian ravager spoiled the Indians of above one hundred and twenty millions of pounds.

As to the number of souls who were plunged into eternity upon this unhappy occasion, they are not reckoned less than two hundred thousand; of whom fell between Lahor and Karnal, in the battle, and a few days afterwards, forty thousand; in the massacre one hundred and ten thousand; in the villages, and those who died by famine, fifty thousand. We will now leave the Indians to repair by industry and commerce, the havock created by their avaricious enemy, and follow Nadir in his march.

C H A P. LXII.

Nadir continues his march from the gardens of Shalimar. An instance of his vanity and avarice. His cruelty towards numbers of the peasants. Contribution of Lahor. His passage over the Chantrou obstructed. He returns back towards Lahor. Confederacy of the Afghans and Indians to oppose his passage through the defiles. He seizes the plunder belonging to his own soldiers. His march to Peishor. Khudayar Khan refuses to acknowledge the sovereignty of Nadir, and is reduced. Nadir pursues his march to Kandahar. He sends his treasures to Kælat, and conquers Khieva and Bokhara.

THE necessary dispositions being made, on the sixth of May Nadir pursued his march from the gardens of Shalimar, directing his course to the plains of Karnal, where the Indians first owned him as their conqueror. According to the ordinary consequence of vast possessions, the precautions he took, seemed to argue a greater inquietude for the preservation,

¹ This review of the matter would tempt one to believe that the treasure was not of such importance, though we may presume that it was a larger sum than ever was collected in one treasury: nor is it of consequence, since whatever it was, it is dissipated.

^k 25,000,000 l.

preservation, than he had shewn solicitude for the acquisition, of his riches.

When he arrived on the plains of Karnal, he sent for the chief¹ of the town of that name, and commanded him to build a village on the spot he had incamped, and to call it by the name of Fateh Abad^m: for this purpose, it is said, he gave him five thousand rupees. It is not improbable, that an inclination to continue the memory of his victory, might induce him to be at this expence; but this sum of 600 *l.* is so very inconsiderable, that it plainly proves how strong the passion of avarice became in his breast amidst such vast riches.

As the army was marching, the peasants watched their opportunities to plunder or kill the soldiers, who were sent out to provide necessaries; they also pillaged the exterior parts of the camp in the night, insomuch that the Persians lost above a thousand camels, horses, and mules, before they reached Taniseer. The Shah, enraged at this behaviour, gave orders for plundering that town, and putting the inhabitants to the sword. Other towns and villages suffered the same fate: By this step he intended to terrify the people into compliance, since he could not by any other means engage them to supply his army.

As Zekariah Khan, the governor of Lahor, had made his submissions to Nadir, when he passed through the province of Penjab in his way to Dehlie; it was apprehended that the inhabitants had nothing to fear: but as soon as the Khan heard of the massacre of Dehlie, and of the severity with which the contributions had been exacted in that city, he foresaw the storm that was gathering. Resolving therefore not to be taken at a disadvantage, he summoned all the merchants, money-changersⁿ, and wealthy inhabitants, to bring in their quotas towards raising a crore of rupees^o. This sum was deemed the utmost which they could pay.

Nadir was no sooner arrived at the gardens of Shalimar, than he dispatched Abdul Baki Khan, with a considerable body of troops, to demand a large contribution of Lahor; and having passed through Serhind, he was drawing near to the capital of the province, when Zekariah Khan went out to meet him. The crore of rupees was presented, with the strongest protestation that this sum was the utmost which the
city

¹ Zemidar.

^m Signifies the habitation of victory.

ⁿ Serafs.

^o 1,250,000 *l.*

city could raise; that if it was his pleasure to pillage or to slaughter the inhabitants, they were unable to resist his forces, and therefore resigned to whatever should be determined. Abdul Baki Khan had orders to demand a larger sum; but this just representation being made to the Shah, the crore of rupees was accepted, and the Persian army continued their march.

When they arrived on the banks of the Chantrou, the bridge of boats prepared for their passage had been carried away by a sudden swelling of the waters; Nadir therefore directed his march back, and entered the province of Penjab. A body of horse was dispatched to Lahor the capital, to demand provisions. The inhabitants, who had hardly recovered from their dread of fire and sword, and the late approach of the Persian army, and were impoverished by the contributions they had paid, now thought only of saving their lives by flight. Zekariah Khan was no sooner informed of the panic with which the people were struck, than he went and threw himself at Nadir's feet, and begged that he would not approach nearer the city, engaging at the same time that the bridge should be repaired without delay: it was accordingly performed, and the army passed over.

Nadir then directed his course towards Rehnas, a fortified city on the eastern banks of the Indus near Suvat, a branch of that river. Thence advancing to Attok, he attempted to pass the Indus, into the dominions which had been lately yielded up to him. Here the want of a sufficient number of boats to form the bridge obliged him to halt: and this delay afforded time to the Afghans and the Indians, who inhabited the western side of the river, to take up arms. The vast booty which the Persians had amassed, was a temptation not to be resisted; and they seemed resolved to try their fortune, if by uniting their forces they could seize some part of the plunder.

What their efforts would have produced, had they been carried into execution, it is not easy to determine. The Persian king certainly thought himself in danger, and chose rather to negotiate for a free passage, than run a hazard where there was nothing to gain. The consideration of a vast treasure, had rendered the fierce and intrepid Nadir, cautious and circumspect. His mind, ever fertile in expedients, now suggested to him to write to Nacir Khan, the late governor of Cabul, whom he had left at Peishor, commanding him in the most express terms to use his interest to disperse the tribes, who were assembled in the mountains. The Khan immediately

diately sent for the chiefs of this confederacy. and persuaded them to decline their enterprize, for which, according to his instructions, he engaged to give them ten lacks of rupees^p. However large this sum might appear upon another occasion, it was an object of very little consideration compared with the bulk of Nadir's treasure; he therefore remitted this sum without delay, and purchased a free passage^q.

In the mean time the bridge was preparing for his passage over the Indus, when messengers arrived from the court of the Great Moghol, requesting in behalf of that prince the redemption of two rich feather-jewels, belonging to the head-dress of the sultana. Upon this, orders were given for searching the royal treasury, but no such jewels could be found. It was reasonable to presume that they had been brought away from the Indian court, and of course they must be in the possession of some officer or soldier in the army.

This suggested to Nadir sufficient reason to challenge all precious stones as his property; accordingly he ordered strict search to be made, and that all should be brought into the treasury under the penalty of death. Numbers of the soldiers, whose passion for gain was not perhaps inferior to that of their general, enraged to see the fruits of so long and perilous a march ravished from them, threw them into the Indus; and others concealed them in the earth: insomuch, that although great quantities were collected, this extraordinary resolution it is believed cost some millions of crowns value to Persia. The jewels, plundered both by the private men and officers, must have been very considerable: the presents and bribes which they received, amounted to a great sum, particularly on the unhappy occasion of the massacre of Dehlie, when many of the Indian lords and persons of distinction saved their lives by the mere force of their great riches. A great part of this, especially jewels which could be easily concealed, was not till then brought into the royal treasury^r. The quantity of precious stones, delivered up to Nadir upon this occasion, amounted to a great value; but neither of the jewels in question appeared till a considerable time after, when one of them was found among the sequestered effects of a general officer, who was put to death; the other never appeared.

It

^p 125,000 *l*.

^q It is said that other inhabitants of the mountains afterwards made the same demand, which he refused to comply with.

^r See Vol. I. Chap. XXXVIII. for the quantity of large stones on horse furniture.

It is amazing to consider the ascendancy which Nadir had acquired over his army, and that such a step as this did not produce a revolt^t; but his address in sowing the seeds of jealousy and distrust among them was such, that they were afraid of each other; and this ever proved his best security. Numbers of them might now be more inclined to desert, than to give up their valuable plunder; yet the circumstances they were in, with regard to an enemy's country, was an insuperable obstacle to their taking such a step.

After passing the Indus, he directed his march to Peishor, where he halted for some days: he left a Persian general, with a considerable body of forces, but confirmed Nacir Khan in the government of that province, and conferred several honours on him, in acknowledgment of his great services. From thence, continuing his rout towards Cabul, he detached Abdul Baki Khan, with five thousand horse, to receive homage from Khudayar Khan, governor of Pekier^t. This Khan had refused to pay homage to Nadir, now sovereign of that country; and collected a considerable body of forces to oppose the Persian army. Finding that his late master the Great Moghol had not been able to support him, he resolved to try if he could obtain an independent sovereignty.

Abdul Baki Khan soon arrived on the frontiers of this country, but was in no situation to reduce Khudayar Khan by force. He therefore sent to acquaint this Indian lord of his arrival, and at the same time to advise him to make a ready submission. This offer being rejected with contempt, Abdul Baki informed the Shah of the circumstances which he was in. Nadir being now near Kandahar, sent his treasures and heavy baggage under a numerous convoy into that strong fortress, and then directed his course south east through the country of Hazarijat. Khudayar Khan was no sooner informed of the march of the Persian army, than he burnt a forest, laid waste the open country, and used his endeavours to poison the water.

This

^t I was told in Persia, that he took from the soldiers all their money also, except one hundred crowns; some accounts mention two hundred and fifty crowns; but I have some difficulty in believing either. As to jewels, they would be subject to discovery in the sale of them, which would not have been the case with money.

^t This country is to the south of Cabul on the Indus, bordering upon Multan: I do not find it laid down by De Lisle. There are several forts and strong places in it, such as Louheri, Sekier, and Tekier. The people of this country are partly Mahomedans, and partly Pagans.

This proceeding caused a new alarm in the Moghol's territories: Nadir was no sooner informed of the desperate measures which this Indian lord had taken to support himself, than he sent his commands to Zekariah Khan, the governor of Lahor, and also to his son Haiat Ulla Khan, governor of Multan, to repair to his camp immediately, and to furnish his army with provisions. How great soever their reluctance, necessity obliged them to pay a ready obedience to the summons. Zekariah Khan was reputed an able politician: and this task now required the exercise of his abilities; since he had not only to provide the Persian army with provisions, but also to obtain the submission of Khudayar Khan. The latter offered to make such presents as his circumstances permitted, with condition that the Persian army would pursue their rout to Kandahar, without making any irruption into his territories; otherwise he persisted in his defiance.

This was a language to which the victorious king of Persia was not accustomed; he therefore ordered Zekariah Khan to bring to him those chiefs of the country who had submitted, as hostages for the good behaviour of their people; and at the same time to conduct his army by a rout, where they might be properly supported, in order to compel Khudayar Khan to surrender.

As soon as Nadir arrived in the neighbourhood of Khudabad^a, the Indian chief retired with his riches to Emir-Kiout, a strong fort on the opposite side of the river Hest-Nud. Zekariah Khan renewed his entreaties in terms so persuasive, that at length assurance being sent that Nadir would pardon what was past, and accept a moderate present, Khudayar Khan consented to send his son, and to make his submission. This young lord was very kindly received, and entertained in a sumptuous manner, together with all his numerous attendance. In the mean while, Nadir ordered some parties of his troops to take possession of the boats in which the Indians came, and by favour of the night to repass the river. This was performed so well, that the Indians who guarded the fort of Emir-Kiout, taking them for the retinue of their Khan's son, suffered the Persians to enter, and take possession of it. The Khan had time to make his escape, but at length thought proper to capitulate, and give up all his riches.

The news of this affair having reached the Moghol's court, a report prevailed, as if the insatiable avarice of Nadir was bringing

^a We are left entirely to seek for this city; the country to the west of the Indus, towards the Indian sea, seems to be very little known to the map-makers.

bringing him a second time into the Indian territories; these apprehensions alarmed the whole country; and occasioned a great consternation. Several of the princes ^w who commanded in the mountains, formed a confederacy to oppose his passage; and his not invading their dominions, was imputed to the great preparations made to oppose him.

It is very hard to believe, that a canine appetite for gold should so far efface all sentiments of honour and clemency in the mind of Nadir, as to induce him to commit so flagrant a violation of the treaty lately concluded with the Moghol, and to obliterate the remembrance of his being a king, by an act so unworthy. The power derived from force only, can be no security, when princes throw off even the mask of justice, and as it were declare war against the rational species. Whatever suspicion he might lie under on this occasion, he gave great proofs of esteem for Zekariah Khan, by making him several presents, and sending him to Dehlie with a number of fine horses for Mahommed Shah. The Indians were soon after delivered from their fears, by the joyful news that the Persian army was past Kandahar.

We have already observed, that whilst Nadir was in Kandahar, his son, Riza Kouli Myrza, had made an incursion as far as Balkh; which submitted to him; but he was not able to subdue the Ousbeg Tartars of Khieva and Bokhara ^x, who, during the troubles in the Persian empire, had made frequent inroads into Khorasan, and carried many thousands of the inhabitants into slavery. These people are remarkable for their vivacity and love of liberty. As they are for the most part of the sect of the Sunnis, they hate the Persians; but the difference in religion has not occasioned such frequent contests, as their neighbourhood and strong propensity to rapine. Khorasan had often suffered by their depredations, nor had they been intirely quiet during the absence of the Persian army in India. Nadir had some time before sent embassadors to the Khan of Khieva, demanding the Persians, numbers of whom were detained in slavery in that country. But these Tartars were intoxicated with their former success, and having enjoyed an uninterrupted security for many years, seemed to have lost all sense of danger. Contrary to the laws of nations, which even in this country are deemed sacred, with respect to the representatives of kings, they put the

VOL. II.

L 1

Persian

^w Rajahs.

^x Some antiquaries are of opinion, that these people are the descendents of the tribe of Israel, whom Salamazar, king of Assyria, sent into Media.

Persian ambassadors to death ; only one, the least considerable in rank, was sent back to his master without his nose and ears. Such a proceeding could not but incense the impetuous Nadir, and draw on the fire of his resentment.

The occasion was now favourable for the reduction of these people. Nadir having detached a large body of his troops from Kandahar to Kælat with his treasures, took the rout through the kingdom of Balkh. He passed the river Amo, and arrived in the neighbourhood of Bokhara about the beginning of October, with an army of near fifty thousand men. The Ousbeg Tartars who inhabit this city and its district, submitted to him immediately. He set at liberty the Persians who had been detained in captivity, and insisted about twelve thousand of the inhabitants who were fit to bear arms ; these Ousbegs being esteemed the best soldiers in Tartary. In consequence of the ready submission of the Khan of this country, Nadir invested him with the government of all the territories of Bokhara to the north of the Amo, and also made very valuable presents to him and his dependents.

The Khan of Khieva had taken the field with about twenty thousand men. He had hardly ever seen a more formidable army, and flattered himself with success : but as soon as he heard of the superior numbers of the Persians, and that Nadir himself was at their head, he retired with precipitation towards his capital. The Persian king being informed of the situation of the enemy, made such forced marches, that the Ousbegs were obliged to stop at Shanka^y. Here the Khan made a brave resistance, but was at length obliged to surrender. Nadir challenged him with the murder of his ambassadors : he excused himself, alledging that it was done by the Ousbegs without his knowledge. To this the Persian king replied ; “ If you have not abilities to govern the few subjects who inhabit your territories, you do not deserve to live ; and for the affront shewn me in the murder of my ambassadors, you have no title to die like men ; you shall die like dogs.” He then ordered the executioners to cut the throats of the Khan and about thirty of his chief attendants ; a punishment esteemed the most ignominious among the Persians. Upon the news of the fate of this Khan, all the towns and villages surrendered except the capital.

The Inhabitants of Khieva shut their gates against the conqueror, resolving to oppose him to the last extremity. Several of them, who were apprehensive of the consequences of so rash an enterprize, attempted to leave the town, and were

put

^y A city about half a day's journey to the eastward of Khieva.

put to death as deserters. The number of their Persian slaves was so great, that some were cruelly put to death in cold blood, merely out of fear of their rising, and the rest were imprisoned. The 8th of November Nadir Shah incamped on the east side of Khieva: he sent several messages and demanded a parley, but the Ousbegs absolutely refused to grant it. The Persian army therefore invested the city, and planted eighteen cannon, and sixteen mortars^a; at different places. They also raised machines of wood, from whence they could see over the walls: and after throwing up a breast-work, to guard themselves from the enemy's small shot, they attacked the town. These Tartars were yet possessed of a few field-pieces, which they had taken from the unfortunate prince Beckawitz^a. On the 14th the Shah ordered the town to be battered in breach^b. The engineers did their part so well, that the inhabitants soon became sensible of their rashness. Several breaches being now made, and the ditch almost filled, Nadir gave orders for storming: upon this the Ousbegs surrendered at discretion. An inventory was taken of every thing in the city; and all the foreigners^c were ordered to appear before the Shah.

L 1 2

The

^a Whether these had been carried into India is not said; it may be rather presumed they were brought from thence, as they had the conveniency of elephants, which bear very great burthens. It has been often said that Nadir carried heavy cannon with him into India, by breaking them into pieces, and casting them a-fresh when he had occasion for them; but this account favours too much of the marvellous. Besides these, the Persians had many field-pieces, and very long swivel guns. The last were fixed on pack-saddles, and carried by camels: these carried cartridge-shot to a great distance, and made great havock; I have already mentioned them under the name of harquebusses. See Vol. II. Chap. XXVIII.

^a See account of this expedition, Vol. I. Chap. XXIX.

^b Mr. Thomson and Mr. Hogg, mentioned in Vol. I. Chap. LII. were in the town during this siege, and weighed one of these balls; but I am inclined to think they were fired from mortars.

^c Among these were the two English travellers above mentioned. Nadir Shah enquired of them what their business was. Being informed they were merchants, he told them they were at liberty to trade through all his dominions; and if any wrong was done them, and they were not redressed by his officers, they should apply to him; they were then dismissed, and a passport was given them. These persons reported, that many, even of the meaner soldiers in the Persian army, had cloaths of rich silk, and plenty

The 28th of November Nadir marched from Khieva, taking with him near twenty thousand Persians who had been in captivity, with eight thousand Ousbegs as recruits. He left a governor of his own appointing, attended only by a few Persians, as if he was sure of the obedience of these Tartars, or thought them not worth an army to keep them in awe.

C H A P. LXIII.

Nadir returns to Persia. Riza Kouli Myrza murders Shah Tæhmas, and makes an attempt against his father's life. Conduct of Nadir towards his son. He arrives in the neighbourhood of Isfahan.

NADIR having now conquered all his enemies on the eastern frontiers of his dominions, prepared to return into Persia. His chief concern was the security of his vast treasure; he therefore marched to Kælat, which is a few days journey to the southward of Mefched. Here he established a sufficient guard of his best troops, and conferred the command on a brother of Lutf Ali Khan.

It has been already remarked, that the first year of Nadir's absence had given his son Riza Kouli Myrza such a taste of power, that he exerted it in the most wanton manner on several occasions, to oppress the people, and to indulge his avarice^d. We have also taken notice that his father, upon being informed of these arbitrary proceedings, thought proper to restrain his authority. The beginning of this year a report prevailed at Isfahan, that the Persian army had been defeated in India, and that Nadir Shah was slain. His son Riza Kouli Myrza received this account with a seeming satisfaction. In a real or affected persuasion that it was true, he in some measure assumed the regal authority. He began, by causing the unfortunate Shah Tæhmas to be put to death, together with all his family, who were prisoners at Sebsawar. The circumstances of the tragical end of this prince, seem to prove

plenty of Indian money. The reader will observe that the journal of these travellers, as mentioned in Vol. I. Chap. LII. is said to have been in 1740, but it ought to be 1739.

^d Among other particulars it is related of him, that in a visit he received from the Armenian patriarch, he demanded of this priest, his cap and crozier, which were set with precious stones, alledging that he had occasion for them, for his father's government, and the use of his army.

prove that Nadir was not dissatisfied with this action, and would hardly have called his son to any severe account for it, had not the motive been an impatient desire of wearing the diadem himself.

The person, employed in this regicide, was Mahommed Hussein Khan*. He had been remarkably active in seizing this unfortunate prince; and it is probable he was now fearful, that if Nadir had met with any misfortune, Tæhmas would be restored again to the throne of his ancestors. The murder was said to have been committed after this manner: Mahommed Hussein Khan, under the pretence of friendship, represented to Tæhmas that his life was threatened, and therefore advised him to retire either into Turkey or Russia, and that himself would facilitate his escape. As soon as this prince was in his possession, he reproached him with cowardice, told him he was unworthy to wear a crown, and at the same time gave a signal to his groom † to kill him.

Thus fell the last of the descendents of the famous Ismael Sefie, whose race had filled the throne of Persia for near two hundred and fifty years. It has been seen how remarkable this prince was for a series of misfortunes, during the last seventeen years. Providence seemed to have often interposed for his deliverance; and tho' neither his resolution nor abilities were extraordinary, yet in a less corrupt state he might have rendered his subjects happy, and by supporting his family, prevented that effusion of blood which has exhausted Persia of its inhabitants, if not totally subverted that antient monarchy.

Nadir, though returning in triumph, loaded with spoil, was now to suffer one of the bitterest calamities. As if Providence had ordained it as a punishment for his enormous offences, his eldest son Riza Kouli Myrza, for whom he had a paternal tenderness, formed a confederacy with a few other persons, to deprive his father of his life. For this purpose he employed a certain Afghan soldier to shoot the king, as he was returning from Kælat.

It has been already explained, in what manner the Persian kings travel upon common occasions, detached from their army. The Shah was arrived in a narrow pass covered with wood, in the mountains which separate the provinces of

L 1 3

Khorasan

* This is the same person with whom I had such particular connexions at Astrabad.

† The person who was put to death in the rebellion of Astrabad. See Vol. I. Chap. XXX.

Khorasan and Astrabad⁸, having with him only his women and eunuchs: here it was the intrepid Afghan dug a pit to conceal himself, from whence he might take his aim with the greater exactness. He fired his piece, and the bullet passed under Nadir's right arm, and shot him in the left hand: the horse also being wounded in the neck, through pain or surprize fell. The Afghan was preparing to issue from the wood, and finish his business with his sabre; but the eunuchs, drawing their sabres to protect their master, rendered the accomplishment of his purpose impracticable. A considerable reward was immediately offered for apprehending the assassin, and a promise of pardon if he would discover himself. Many of the inhabitants of the mountains were brought before the Shah: some of them had offered sums of money to the soldiers to excuse their appearance. This was urged as a proof of their guilt, but Nadir commanded that they should be released, with this reflection: "These people are innocent. The man who has made so daring an attempt on my life, must be a person⁹ of distinguished bravery, whose courage is not inferior to my own."

It was not long a secret, that the contriver of this assassination was no less than his son Riza Kouli Myrza, whose manners we have already observed had so great a resemblance with those of his father. Riza Kouli being brought before Nadir, he intreated him to think of his crime, to ask pardon, and promise obedience. "Consider," says he, "I am your general, your sovereign, your friend, your father. Consider the duty you owe me in these several relations. Reflect on the small acknowledgments which I require of you. You are in my power, but I would not have you perish. Live, be happy, and a king, whenever providence shall take me from the earth." He employed several of his principal officers to persuade his son to repentance, but Riza Kouli

⁸ This pass is supposed to be the same through which Alexander pursued Bessus the Bactrian traitor.

⁹ The discovery of this assassin was not made till above a year afterwards, when Nadir recollecting a certain man who had often distinguished himself in the field of battle, enquired after him; and being informed that this man had absented himself at such a time, it immediately occurred to him that he must certainly be the person who had shot at him. The Shah therefore ordered that the man should be sought for, and brought before him. He was accordingly found in Kandahar, and conducted to the camp, where he confessed the fact. Nadir said to him, "You are a very brave fellow; but to prevent your taking such good aim, you must lose your eyes."

Kouli was inflexible, and obstinately persisted that he had done no wrong in attempting his father's life. He told him to his face, "You are a tyrant, and ought to die. I know the most you can do is to kill me." The afflicted Nadir between rage and tenderness said, "No, I will not take your life, but I will make you an example to all the princes of the earth; I will cut out your eyes." Riza Kouli, with a fierceness peculiar to himself, replied, "Cut them out, and put them into".

Necessity thus obliged Nadir to deprive his darling son of his sight, and himself of all hopes of making him his heir. The genius and intrepidity of this young man had filled Nadir with sanguine expectations of continuing the diadem in his family, which indeed could hardly be expected by a successor of less resolution than himself. Some days after this event, Nadir commanded that his son should be brought before him, and he enquired of him, yet with a mixture of paternal tenderness, concerning his health. The son, still repugnant to every sentiment of filial affection, and not rendered less daring by his distress, replied, "You have not blinded me so much as you have blinded all Persia: what the consequence must be, time will discover." It is remarkable, that Nadir never after permitted his son to have any women, nor would he trust him in any place but under his own eye.

In February this year, the Shah arrived with his army in the neighbourhood of Isfahan. The satisfaction which the Persians felt upon his return, arose chiefly from the hopes that his immense riches, the fruits of a three years campaign, would free them from the heavy burthen of supporting a numerous army: how ill grounded their expectations were, we shall soon have occasion to relate.

¹ It must be observed, that the indecent mention of a woman of honour and distinction, is no less disrespectful in Persia, than in the polite parts of Europe; consequently it is the highest indignity to mention in gross terms the favourite wife of a king.

P A R T XIII.

FROM THE

Return of NADIR SHAH to Isfahan
from his INDIAN Expedition in 1740,
TILL

He was ASSASINATED in 1747.

C H A P. LXIV.

Reflections on the vanity of military exploits. Nadir sends a pompous embassy to Russia, and another to Turkey. Circumstances of the Turks. Nadir's demands on them. His war with the Arabians. His conduct towards the Armenian patriarch. His project of introducing a new religion into Persia. He orders a translation of the evangelists. Comparison of his character, and that of Akbar, formerly emperor of India.

1740. **T**HE affliction which Nadir must naturally have felt from the misfortune which happened to his darling son, gave place in some measure to the gratification of his vanity. It is reasonable to presume from the genius of this man, that more than half the joy of his triumphs would have been lost, but for the reflection of the figure he should make in the esteem of other princes.

Actions, truly heroic, like those of the deity, whose beneficence we should strive to imitate, derive no real excellence from applause, being in themselves invariably good. The natural greatness and rectitude of the soul can never be expressed in actions destructive to mankind: and what for the most part are pompous triumphs, or the spoils of plundered provinces, but so many monuments of cruelty, ambition, or avarice? yet when our conduct will not bear the
test

test of reason, our passions prompt us to seek a vain applause, and still we glory.

What reflections Nadir might now make upon himself, are not objects of our instruction so much, as those which we ought to make on him. As to his immense treasures, they served for little more than to enlarge his desire to support his tyrannical power, by the mere notion of his wealth; and to render Persia more emphatically miserable. But notwithstanding his extreme avarice, he sent a magnificent embassy with presents of great value to the Russian court, and another to the grand signior.

The ambassadors to the Russian empress were Saidar Khan*, and Hussein Khan, with a retinue of two thousand persons, who convoyed ten elephants with several jewels and other rich presents. Saidar Khan died at Kiflar, but Hussein proceeded to Astrachan, where he was required to stop, till proper orders were sent from court for his entertainment. Such embassies gratify the pride of those princes by whom they are sent, but create a vast expence¹ to those who are to receive them. It was not till the end of October^m the next year, that the ambassador made his public entry into St. Petersburg, which was in several respects magnificent, tho' part of the Persian retinue made but a mean appearance. The court was not wanting in shewing this Persian minister all the honour due to his rank. His business was to acquaint the sovereign of Russia, of the great feats of his master in the conquest of India, and of the immense spoil which he had brought from thence; a specimen of which he presented to the

* This is the person mentioned in the Note, page 329, who died at Kiflar. He was an old man, and reputed very brave, and a lover of justice, but otherwise not tender of spilling blood. I was told the following circumstance concerning him; he was once observing that he wanted something to try his sabre; upon which a very old man in the company, acknowledging that he had lived long enough, offered his neck: Saidar took him at his word, and struck off his head.

¹ It was said, that this ambassador made a demand of no less than 200 sheep, 2000 pounds of rice, and other provisions in proportion for his daily support.

^m The policy of princes in that part of the world, especially when things are in a precarious state, is often the cause of these delays: some time had been spent in the adjustment of the ceremonies, and in making provision for so numerous a retinue; for not less than twelve or fifteen hundred persons attended this ambassador to St. Petersburg.

the Russian empress, in the elephantsⁿ, jewels, and other valuables with which he was charged; that his master had also restored the Indian monarch to his dominions, and now offered his friendship to the sovereign of Russia, with whom he was willing to enter into a defensive and offensive alliance^o.

We have already mentioned, that during his absence in the late expedition, he sent ambassadors to the grand signior, demanding a passport to travel through the Ottoman empire to Mecca. The Turkish ministry considered this request as capricious, since it could never be presumed that such consent would be granted; and if he meant to take the liberty of making that pilgrimage with an army; it would rather be with a view to plunder the place of its immense riches, than to offer up his prayers of thanksgiving for his successes in India. The Turks were indeed afraid that he meant to feed his insatiable avarice with this precious morsel. What added to their terror, was the consideration of the extraordinary interposition of providence in the peace which he had made with them, in consequence whereof he had employed his forces in so distant a country, and was coming home loaded with the spoils of India. It could hardly be expected that his military genius would suffer him to be long idle: and looking on themselves almost as the only power against whom he could turn his arms, they concluded a peace with the Russians and Imperialists, and made great preparations for marching an army into Asia.

Some time after Nadir sent an envoy to acquaint the Port, that notwithstanding they refused him a passage to Mecca, it was his intention to live in friendship with the grand signior. The new ambassador, whom he charged with his compliments to the Ottoman emperor, carried several rich jewels, nine elephants, and a great number of camels, as a present: and according to the dignity he assumed, and the splendor of eastern

ⁿ There are several of these yet remaining in St. Petersburg, which, tho' entirely useless, are supported for curiosity, and the honour of the sovereign. The ordinary food of these animals was rice, meal, and such like; but the Russians have very judiciously taught them to eat hay.

^o It was said this ambassador demanded ship carpenters, which the Russians refused, objecting that they had none except foreigners, who were engaged to serve them for a certain time, but that they had no power to send them out of their country. The prosecution of the design which Nadir had formed of building ships on the Caspian sea, was the cause of the early ruin of our Caspian trade.

eastern monarchs, his retinue was composed of near two thousand persons. As their motions were slow, they did not arrive till the beginning of the next year. The grand vizier received this ambassador with the utmost demonstration of esteem; however, when the purport of his commission was demanded, he seemed to be offended, declaring that he would communicate it only to the grand signior in person. The Turks soon found that Nadir was no less arrogant in his proposals of the terms of friendship, than ostentatious of his riches, as appeared by the prodigality of his presents; under these circumstances they were induced to watch the ambassador as a secret enemy.

Nadir again renewed his claim to all the provinces and cities which in antient times belonged to the crown of Persia; and insisted that the Turks ought to pay the expence of the late war, or yield some provinces as an equivalent. These demands appeared to the Turks imperious and exorbitant, and they concluded that the Shah of Persia meant only to find a pretext to break with them. As the late wars had exhausted their treasuries, and the army was in arrears, orders were sent to the Baschas in all their respective governments, to collect the taxes, and remit them immediately to court.

In the mean while Nadir employed himself in reducing the Arabian rebels^p, who had revolted during his absence: the Ousbegs of Khieva had also taken up arms, and destroyed the Persian Khan who had been appointed their governor, together with all the native subjects of Persia, whom Nadir had left in that city. The Aral Tartars made inroads, and involved that country in great distraction, so that all communication was cut off, and preparations were made to attack them afresh. For this purpose Nadir marched with a numerous body of forces to Tæhيران, in order to defend the province of Khorasan, in case it should be invaded, or to send detachments against the Ousbegs^q.

We have already seen in what manner he acted as to the affair of religion. The beginning of this year, a dispute happened between the Armenian patriarch, and some romish missionaries. The matter being necessarily referred to Nadir, he fined the patriarch twenty-four thousand crowns, alledging that priests had no occasion for riches; that they only served to perplex the mind, and take it off from pursuits of a religious

^p The Houles.

^q It may be presumed that he sent fresh forces against these Tartars, for he had a free communication with them in 1744, and was supplied with recruits from Khieva and Bokhara.

religious nature; but as to himself, the support of his army rendered money very necessary.

It will not appear a subject of surprize, that a prince who had the courage to appropriate to himself by an arbitrary act all the revenues of the clergy of the national religion, should tax the chief of his subjects of a different persuasion. We find him indeed often aiming to confound the distinctions of the religions already professed by his people, as if he meant to introduce one of his own contriving. About this time he ordered a sumptuous mausoleum to be built at Mesched, in which he proposed to have his body laid: towards this no cost was spared; the jasper tomb in which Tamerlane was laid at Balkh^r was brought from thence at a great charge; however, as it did not suit the place, he returned it to its ancient mansion. It is remarkable that this mausoleum was erected intirely by christians; at the same time as he caused an Armenian church to be built by his Mahomedan subjects.

To attempt any desperate invasion of the liberties of mankind, no method seems to be more effectual than that of depreciating or subverting the established religion of a country^c. The subject of religion will ever be of the highest moment to mankind; since it is only another word to express the belief of the being of a God, and the immortality of the soul; but at the same time that it has taken root in the hearts, and influences the conduct of one part of mankind, it has served as a political engine, or the instrument of temporal advantages to those who are vulgarly said to have no religion. Persia was once chosen as a more peculiar scene, where the Almighty manifested his power in a very singular manner; but many ages have past since the substance of religion seems to have been changed for the shadow. We find, however, a remarkable aptitude in the Persians to the belief of things relating to a future state.

Nadir took frequent occasion to mention the feats of Ali in terms of contempt; arraigning his conduct, as a soldier, for leading his army into the deserts of Arabia, where numbers perished for want of water. "And why," says he, addressing himself to the people, "instead of praying to Ali do
" you

^r It is thought by some that the remains of this Tartar hero were deposited at Samarcand, which might be the case originally, and upon the decay of that place the tomb be brought to Balkh.

^c With some exceptions however. The people of Great Britain owe their liberty, in a great measure, to the reformation.

“you not call on God.” In his religious schemes he appeared to have a complicated motive: he sought to amuse his people, and at the same time to increase his fame, by establishing a new faith, after the manner of his predecessors. As he had destroyed the Seffie family, which had been established on the throne of Persia on a principle of piety and faith; so he seemed desirous to be the original of a new race of kings, on the basis of new tenets in religion. This motive was so peculiarly adapted to the genius of the Persians, that we may naturally conclude he expected to derive from hence a security to himself and his family.

Towards the close of this year, he caused a translation of the four evangelists to be made in Persic. It seemed, however, from the manner in which he conducted this business, to be more the effect of caprice, than of any steady and consistent plan. The affair was put under the direction of Myrza Mehtie, a man of some learning, who being vested with a proper authority for the purpose, summoned several Armenian bishops and priests, together with divers missionaries of the Romish church, and Persian Mullahs, to meet him at Isfahan. As to the latter, they could not be gainers; since the change, if any took place, was to be in prejudice of Mahommedanism. Besides, Nadir's conduct towards them had been severe to an extreme, and unprecedented; many of them therefore gave Myrza Mehtie large bribes to excuse their appearance.

Among the christians summoned on this occasion, only one Romish priest, born in Persia, was a sufficient master of the language, to enter upon a work of so critical a nature. As to the Armenians, tho' they are born subjects to Persia, and intermixed with the inhabitants, yet there are very few of them who understand the language fundamentally. It was natural to expect, that Myrza Mehtie and the Persian Mullahs, would be more solicitous how to please Nadir, and support the credit of Mahommedanism, than to divest themselves of prejudices, and become masters of so important a subject. This translation was dressed up with all the glosses which the fables and perplexities of the khoran could warrant; their chief guide was an antient Arabic and Persian translation. Father Des Vignes, a French missionary, was also employed in this work, in which he made use of the
vulgate

^f Allah is the name they give the deity. It is remarkable, that the Tartars when they believe themselves to be dying, repeat this word, “Allah, Allah,” continually, as their only invocation, till they waste their spirits, and expire.

vulgate edition. They were but six months in completing this translation, and transcribing several fair copies of it.

1741. In May following, Myrza Mehtie, with the Persian Mullahs, and some of the christian priests, set out from Isfahan for the Persian court, which was then held in the incampment near Tæhيران. Nadir received them with some marks of civility, and had a cursory view of the performance. Some part of it was read to him; on which occasion he made several ludicrous remarks on the mysterious part of the christian religion; at the same time he laughed at the Jews, and turned Mahommed and Ali equally into ridicule. Under such circumstances, it was impossible this performance should produce any good effect. He observed that the evangelists did not agree in their accounts, more than the Mahommedan and christian priests; therefore he must remain under the same difficulty that he was in before: that out of both, if it pleased God to give him health, he would engage to make a religion much better than any which had been yet practised by mankind; with several other vague reflections of the like nature. He then dismissed these churchmen and translators with some small presents, not equal in value to the expence of their journey.

It seems as if Nadir had his religion to seek; but this project, under the present state of affairs, and considering the passion he had for military achievements, was very ridiculous, and by no means agreeable to that seriousness with which Oriental princes are generally inclined to treat this important subject. What exalted notions ought not the contemplation of the christian religion to inspire in us, when we observe the cruelty and extravagant principles of government, which generally prevail at the courts of Mahommedan princes! In how shining a light do those appear, whose hearts are warmed with a generous desire of acting up to the dignity peculiar to the christian religion! Nor ought it to be objected, that avarice and ambition have often involved the christian world in distress; when we have such irresistible proof of those proceedings being diametrically opposite to the principles of christianity.

To set the different characters of two eastern princes in contrast with each other, we shall in the note here subjoined give a letter, wrote by Jilal O'Din^t Mahommed Akbar, emperor of Hindostan, to the King of Portugal in 1582. This letter

^t The aggrandizer of religion; a title which he prefixed to his name when he mounted the throne.

letter " seems to exhibit a remarkable proof, how the same freedom of sentiment may operate either on the virtuous or on

" " GLORY eternal to the true king, whose dominions are safe from decay, and whose kingdom is everlasting. The extent of the heavens, and the boundaries of the earth, are but minute parts of his creation; and infinite space but a small point of his productions *. He has regulated the order of the universe, and the government of the sons of Adam, by the understanding of kings, who exercise justice. By his decrees, the ties of love, and bonds of affection, are fastened; and he has implanted in the various beings and creatures of his workmanship, the passion of inclination and union, with a mutual tendency to society: and praises without end are due to the souls of prophets and apostles, who walked in the paths of righteousness, and directed the way to obtain everlasting felicity.

" Those who have improved their understandings, and studied the laws of nature, know, that this terrestrial world, is but a mirror of the spiritual one; and that nothing is more desirable than love, or more sacred than friendship, inasmuch as the æconomy and good order of the world is owing to affection, and the harmony of minds. For wherever the sun of love shineth on the heart, it clears the soul from the darkness of mortality. How ought these qualities to be diligently sought by princes, whose friendly correspondence is the cause of happiness to the world, and to the inhabitants thereof! For this reason it has been my constant and earnest endeavour, to strengthen the ties of friendship, and the bonds of union, among the creatures of the Almighty; especially among kings, whom God by his favour has so highly exalted, and so peculiarly distinguished from the rest of mankind.

" Your royal majesty, who is endowed with intellectual knowledge, and supports the ordinances of Jesus, stands in no need of praise or description. Our neighbourhood † with your renowned majesty, renders our friendship and alliance indispensably necessary; but as a personal conference is not practicable, the want thereof must be supplied by embassies, and mutual correspondencies, that our affairs, and the desires of our hearts, may be manifested to each other.

" Your majesty knows, that philosophers and divines, in all nations, and in all ages, concerning the visible and intellectual world, agree, that the former ought not to be of any consideration, compared with the latter: yet even the wise men
" of

* The Mahommedans, according to the stile of the eastern languages, of which our scriptures are in most parts a remarkable specimen, begin their letters, and most of their other writings, with the praises of God.

† Alludes to the possessions which the Portuguese had at that time in India.

on the vicious side. The emperor Akbar, tho' not so great a warrior, had as liberal a mind, as Nadir Shah. If we may believe this letter was dictated by the heart, how different were the objects that engaged their attention ! The one consulted

“ of these times, and the great ones of all nations, labour and
 “ toil to acquire the perishing things of this visionary state ; and
 “ consume the greatest part of their lives, and their choicest
 “ hours, in procuring material delights, being swallowed up, and
 “ dissolved in fleeting pleasures, and transitory joys. Notwith-
 “ standing these obstructions, and the extensive business of my
 “ government, the most high God, through his eternal favour
 “ and perpetual grace, has inclined my heart always to seek him.
 “ And as he has subjected the dominions of many powerful
 “ princes to me, I endeavour to govern them with understand-
 “ ing. All my subjects are happy ; for his will, and my duty
 “ to him, is the end of all my desires and actions.

“ Mankind are for the most part chained with the bonds of
 “ fashion and constraint, regarding the customs of their forefa-
 “ thers, or their contemporaries and relations ; and without exa-
 “ mining the arguments or reasons for it, give an implicit assent
 “ to that religion in which they have been brought up : thus de-
 “ priving themselves of the means of discovering the truth, which
 “ is the business and end of reason. For my own part, I some-
 “ times converse with the learned of all religions †, and profit
 “ by their respective discourses. But as the veil of language in-
 “ terposes, it is expedient that you send unto me such a person
 “ as can distinctly relate and explain his faith. It has already
 “ reached my fortunate ears, that the heavenly books ‡, the Pen-
 “ tateuch, the Psalms, and Gospels, are translated into Arabic
 “ and Persic. Should a translation of these, or any other books
 “ of general use and advantage, be procurable in your country,
 “ let them be sent to me.

“ For a further confirmation of our friendship, and to secure
 “ the foundation of affection and unity, I have sent my trusty
 “ friend, the learned and honourable Seyd Mazuffer, whom I
 “ have particularly favoured and distinguished : he will personal-
 “ ly communicate to you several matters, in which you may
 “ confide. Always keep open the doors of embassy and corre-
 “ spondence ; and peace be to him who follows the guide. Writ-
 “ ten in the month Ribbi Aval 990 *.”

† He was fond of the Brachmins or Indian priests, for which Abdallah Khan, chief of the Tartars at that time, complained much in his letters to him.

‡ Among these are reckoned the scriptures of the christians by some Mahomedans, who object only that we have corrupted the gospel ; whilst others pretend, that when the khoran was brought on the earth, the gospel was taken into heaven.

* April 1582.

sulted the arts of peace to render his subjects happy ; the other delighted only in war ; and we see what calamities attended it.

C H A P. LXV.

Revolt of the Muntifiks from the Turkish government. Short description of them and their country. The city of Bassora under alarm from the Arabs. Conduct of Achmed Basha. Bassora threatened with a siege by the Persians. Nadir marches against the Lesgees ; and meets with several repulses in Dagistan. The Russians alarmed at his approach. The Lesgees desire the protection of Russia. The Persians make war with the Arabians, and are repulsed. Distress of Persia. Dangerous situation of the Turks. They reduce the Arabian rebels. Great preparations in Persia for a war.

IN the beginning of this year, the Muntifiks, with some other tribes of Arabians, who had lately been under Achmed Basha, threw off the Turkish yoke. These people generally encamp during the summer season in the district of Bassora. The Euphrates, which waters this country, renders it very agreeable, at the same time that grain, vegetables, and pasturage, are in great abundance. It is remarkable that this, as well as the other tribes of the Arabians, appear to be a very different people in the field, from what they are in great cities. When they are associated with the neighbouring nations, they are gentle and polite ; but when they take the field, the fresh air inspires them with different sentiments, and their expertness in the use of the lance and sabre, renders them fierce and intrepid. Their skill in horsemanship, and their capacity of bearing the heat of their burning plains, gives them also a superiority over their enemies ; hence every petty chief in his own district considers himself as a sovereign prince, and as such exacts customs from all passers.

Their conduct in this respect has often occasioned their being considered in no better light than robbers, though many of them are hospitable and generous, as well as brave and sober. Towards those who ask their protection they are remarkably disinterested : numbers of them are distinguished for their vivacity and penetration ; they have also a reputation for poetry and astrology. They generally marry within

their own tribe : their women are very chaste ; indeed they make it death to be otherwise : and there are several instances of fathers killing their own daughters for incontinence : yet for robbery or murder in the field they seldom punish. The different tribes are often at war with each other, and the pillage acquired by this means is looked upon as an honourable possession. When they plunder caravans travelling through their territories, they consider it as reprisals on the Turks and Persians, who often make inroads into their country, and carry away their corn and their flocks. In this part of Arabia, antiently called Caldæa ^w, is seldom seen either cloud or mist.

The jurisdiction of Achmed Bascha had extended as far as the Persian gulph, and included Bassora. The Ottoman court being now jealous of Achmed, this government was abridged, and confined to that of Bagdat ; the revenues of the Bascha were consequently decreased one thousand purses ^x, which rendered him indifferent in regard to the preservation of Bassora. This city had been for some time under alarms, the Muntifiks threatening to pillage it ; which indeed was practicable, had they made the attempt, the inhabitants being unprovided for a siege. The commander exerted himself to put the place in a posture of defence, and at the same time wrote to Achmed Bascha to come or send troops to his assistance. The Bascha was then upon an expedition against the Kourds Bilbaz. As soon as he heard of the revolt of these Arabians, he returned to Bagdat, and after collecting a body of forty thousand men, he marched to the relief of Bassora.

To all human appearance Achmed might have destroyed these Arabians ; but after some light skirmishes he returned to Bagdat. He had artfully sown divisions among the chiefs ^y of the Arabs, particularly the Muntifiks and Benilames ; by this means he became their arbitrator, and turned the scale, insomuch that he appointed and deposed their chiefs, as he found it most for his interest : this was the reason for his declining to fight them. Besides, he thought it necessary to return immediately to his government ; for he foresaw, that Nadir Shah would attack the Turks ; and if he engaged himself at the head of an army out of his jurisdiction, the port might

^w This is the country bordering on the government of Bagdat northward from Bassora.

^x Garrouches or purses, each of 500 dollars, at 4 s. are equal to 10,000 l.

^y These they call Cheiks.

might probably insist on his taking the command against the Persians, to which he was not the least inclined. He knew that by such means he should put himself in the power of the grand signior, whose good-will he had some reason to suspect; or at least that he should engage with an enemy, against whom he apprehended he should make the best defence within his walls.

In the mean while the Arabian Houles continued to act vigorously against the Persians, who could not support the war against them for want of ships. These people made several descents on the Persian coast, and carried off great numbers into slavery. The end of this year, Nadir sent an officer to require the delivery of his subjects in Bassora, which was threatened with a siege by the Persians; whilst the coldness of Achmed Basfa towards the Turkish interest, rendered him suspected of holding a correspondence with the Persian king, and gave great occasion of alarm at Constantinople.

There is a proverbial saying among the Persians, "If any Persian king is a fool, let him march against the Lesgees;" by which is plainly understood, that however potent an army may be, the situation of the mountains of Dagistan is such, and the people are so brave, that the success of an expedition against them must be very precarious. Nadir, whom no Persian king exceeded in vanity or ambition, determined to try his fortune against them. They had given him great offence upon several occasions, particularly by that incursion during his absence in India, in which his brother Ibrahim Khan was slain; nor was Shirvan ever free from their incursions; so that great part of that province was rendered desolate. The end of this year Nadir marched at the head of thirty five thousand men into Shirvan, and from thence directed his course into the mountains of the Lesgees. In order to facilitate his progress, he caused vast quantities of wood to be hewn down on both sides the road, designing to frustrate any attempt which these Tartars might make to lie in ambuscade. In this he seemed also to have a further view. The attack which his son had lately made on his life in the streights of Astrabad, rendered him the more circumspect; nor was he ignorant that the Lesgees are as crafty as they are brave².

About the beginning of this year he entered Dagistan. Here he found a very different people from the 1742. Indians, whom he had so lately conquered. Instead of marching through open and fertile plains, inhabited by a rich and effeminate people, he was to climb up mountains, in many

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places

² See Vol. I. Chap. LV.

places inaccessible, and which in general served as a natural bulwark to those vallies, where only he could expect to find provisions. These were defended by a stout hardy people, whose love of liberty had through ages rendered them invincible: and if he could penetrate through the defiles into these vallies, his enemies might still take shelter in their mountains, and render all his attempts abortive.

The terror of his arms had however induced some of them in the southren parts to send hostages, and make their submission. Of these he removed a considerable number into Khorasan, as well to people that province, as to prevent their future irruptions into the Persian dominions. This step served only to irritate the other Lesgees. Nadir having left one of his generals with a body of eight thousand men at a pass, which commands an entrance into the mountains, he marched forward in pursuit of the Caracaita^a Lesgees, these having retired, and drawn him deep into their country, alarmed the inhabitants of the hills. After uniting some considerable bodies of their forces, they came down during the night, and put his whole army into the utmost confusion. They even attacked the royal tent, took away some of Nadir's treasure, and several of his women.

In the mean while, the Persian general, who was left with eight thousand men to secure the communication with Shirvan, was also attacked with great fury. The Lesgees surprized this body of troops^b, and having the advantage of a wood and rising ground, they made great havock among the Persians, before the latter were able to repulse them.

After many fruitless attempts, Nadir found his army in great distress for provisions. Shirvan had been impoverished to an extreme degree, so as not to be able to supply him, nor was the communication open for caravans; he therefore directed his course to Derbend, the inhabitants of which soon felt the fatal effects of his neighbourhood. Here he began to be extremely sensible of the great use of ships, by means of which he might receive a supply of provisions from the southern coast of the Caspian Sea. This circumstance calls to mind a memorable transaction of this year^c, with relation to the

^a This word signifies black villagers. These are esteemed some of the bravest people among the Lesgees.

^b A French missionary who was present in the Persian camp upon this occasion, informed me of several particulars of the great bravery of the Persians.

^c We find Elton was at Nadir's camp. See Vol. I. Chap. LIII.

the conduct of John Elton, the English factor, whose injudicious engagement gave so great offence to the Russian court, and so fatal a wound to our Caspian commerce: but there has been already too much said on this subject, to need any further observation.

This mighty conqueror was now brought so low, that the remains of his shattered forces, reduced to twenty thousand men, must have deserted or totally perished, had they not been supplied by the Russians. Every part of the world furnishes us with instances, of the love of gain carrying private men beyond the bounds prescribed by laws. I never could conceive, that Nadir entertained the least thought of invading the Russian dominions, but it was sufficient matter of alarm that he attempted to subdue the Lesgees; therefore orders were sent from court, that no provisions should be conveyed as merchandize to the Persian army. However, the traders of Astrachan had assurance of so vast a profit, that they could not resist the temptation, as I have already explained^d: but Derbend notwithstanding suffered such distresses, that a great part of the inhabitants perished by famine.

The long continuance of the Persian army on the Russian frontiers, created a suspicion at the court of St. Petersburg, that Nadir would make pretensions to Kislar, as being built on the Persian territories. This is certain, that he took great offence at the conduct of a Russian officer towards some of his troops, who approached too near to that fort; but for this, satisfaction was made him by the court. Though the temptation of gain had thus engaged the Russian merchants to supply the Persians, yet the court of St. Petersburg was so far alarmed at their approach, that great magazines were ordered to be formed in Astrachan. This city was also put in a state of defence, and a body of troops, to the number of twenty thousand, under the command of general Taranoff, were ordered to file off towards Kislar.

The Lesgees had intimated their desire of putting themselves under the protection of Russia, from the Time of Nadir's first invading their country; and it certainly was the interest of that empire to support the independency of those brave mountaineers, who form so safe a barrier against the Persians. The arrival of the Russian troops contributed to defeat Nadir's designs, so that he found himself obliged to abandon an enterprize to which his skill and fortune were not equal.

As soon as the Russian general arrived in the neighbourhood of Dagistan, the Lefgees made application to him; and from an apprehension of the danger they might be exposed to, in case Nadir was determined to prosecute his design of reducing them, they wrote to this commander as follows:

“ Most honoured and most accomplished general and commander in chief,

“ Our most humble petition consists in this: all the inhabitants of Dagistan having been informed that you are arrived near the frontiers of Kislar with an imperial army, and that your intention is to defend and protect the subjects of her imperial majesty in Andrewska, Koslkoff, and Baxan, as also all the chiefs and rulers of the states bordering on the dominions of her imperial majesty: after longing expectations of your arrival, we have sent our deputies in the name of the whole nation to desire your intercession, that her imperial majesty may receive us under her puissant protection, and permit us to be her slaves. We are determined to hold the golden border of her imperial robes, and in spite of all the evils that may threaten us, we will not be dragged from them, nor seek any other protection, nor acknowledge any other sovereign than God and her imperial majesty.

“ We hereby make a solemn oath of allegiance to her imperial majesty, whom we most humbly implore to protect us against our enemies, and in her exalted clemency to give a favourable answer to our petition. And that her puissant majesty may know in what numbers our troops consist, we send you a list as follows:

“ Achmed Khan the Oufmai has — — —	12,000 men
“ The tribe ^e of Aparz — — —	13,000
“ Achmed Khan lord ^f of Schunketin — —	2,700
“ In the districts of Kanschukul — — —	8,000
“ In Aby — — — — —	5,000
“ In Abugal and Kalacksky — — — —	7,000
“ In Carack ^g — — — — —	7,500
“ In the districts of Kusti 500. In Kly 2,500	3,000
“ In Gedat 4000. In Kinjode 1000; and ^h	6,000
“ in Kurada 1000 — — — —	

“ 66,200^h”

These

^e Horda. ^f Beg. ^g These I presume are the Caracaita, who distressed Nadir's army so much. ^h This number

These people, known to the world, but particularly to the Persians, for their bravery and steady love of liberty; now defended themselves against the conqueror of India, the most powerful of all the monarchs of the east. Nadir saw, though too late, that he had committed a very false step; nor could he retire, without weakening his interest in Persia, and his reputation in general. He was sensible moreover that these very Lefgees would be encouraged by his retreat, to insult all the frontier country, and treat the Persians in those parts as a conquered people, unless he employed a more numerous body of forces to guard Shirvan, than consisted with his other designs. However, of the two evils, it seemed the greatest to waste his time and destroy his troops, when he might employ them usefully in other important projects.

From this time we find Nadir secretly disgusted with the Russian court; however, after his return into Persia he sent for the minister of her imperial majesty who attended the army, and told him, "that he was surprized it ever should be imagined he intended to invade the Russian dominions: that it was true he had not been treated with respect, Russia having failed to send a solemn embassy to congratulate him on his exaltation to the throne of Persia; but as he understood there had been great changes at St. Petersburg, he excused that formality:" at the same time he desired the minister to dispatch a courier to his court to inform the empress, "that he was intirely disposed to support the peace and good understanding which subsisted between the two empires."

During the course of this unfortunate expedition in the north, affairs in the south seemed to preface as little felicity to Persia. Taghi Khan who commanded in Shiras, was sent by the king into the country of Nimrouz¹, in quality of general and admiral, with orders to build ships at Bender Ebou Chehre. This Khan was no sooner arrived upon the coast; than he demanded of the French, the Dutch, and other European nations, ships and ship-builders: and at length, either by money, or forcible measures, he obtained a fleet of ships.

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ber seems greatly to exceed what these people have been generally thought able to bring into the field, tho' the several divisions of them may have easily created mistakes as to their strength.

¹ I find most of the maps which have fallen under my inspection, are very deficient with regard to these places. The Arabs inhabit the north coast of the Persian gulf, and part of the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates, besides their proper country of Arabia:

One great instance of Nadir's cruelty exercised towards the people at this time, was that of obliging them to cut timber in Mazanderan^k, and transport it to Bender Abassi. In a strait line, this is six hundred and sixty miles, and if we consider the circuit they must take to render the road practicable, we must calculate at least one third more: so that it was very plain from this proceeding, that he did not so much consider how things were to be done, as that his commands should be executed at all events. Great quantity of timber was cut on this occasion; but it was transported no farther than the district of Verameh, where it probably remains to this day.

The Arabian Imam or chief of Mescat being deposed, fled with his family and treasures on board his ships then in the port, and sailed to Khurfekian^l, where he landed. From thence he proceeded to Julfar, where was Taghi Khan with the Persian forces. His intention was to put himself under the protection of the Persians, on condition they would assist him to recover his dominions from his rebellious subjects. This design being discovered, several of his followers abandoned him, and carried the vessels again to Mescat. This incident was attended with the junction of the Houles and Mescats. The new chief of the latter being informed that Taghi Khan, at the instigation of the deposed Imam intended to direct all his forces against that city, retired with his troops to Matra, a place a league distant. Mescat being thus abandoned, the Persians entered it without any precaution: and the Arabians taking advantage of the false security of their enemies, surprized and put them to the sword. The Mescats were also victorious at sea.

While Nadir was thus engaged in war by land and sea, and at the same time forming a great army with design to act against the Turks, Persia groaned under the burthen of insupportable taxes. The treasures of India served only to increase the misery of the people, by affording them a frequent and melancholy subject of reflection on the avarice of their king. Notwithstanding the vast projects which Nadir had formed, and the numerous forces he was preparing, in order to carry his designs into execution, he had not yet touched his Indian treasures, since they were deposited at Kælat. What could be the effect of such a conduct? Exorbitant taxes, exacted with all the aggravating circumstances which inhumanity can suggest, drove thousands to despair. Whole villages and towns retired into the mountains, to avoid the
barbarous

^k See Vol. I. Chap. XXXIII.

^l This place is on the southern coast of the Persian gulf.

barbarous treatment shewn them by the Shah's collectors. Crowds of the people fled into the northren parts of India, where their king had so lately triumphed; and great numbers put themselves under the protection of the Turks. On the southern coast some fled into Arabia; and not a few took every opportunity of transporting themselves by sea into the Moghol's empire. In the heart of Persia things took the same course. The Armenians and others, who were equally distressed by exactions, left their habitations under the pretence of commerce or religious pilgrimages; insomuch that the Rahdars¹ were ordered to examine passports. The freedom of egress, which used to prevail, was much interrupted, on this occasion, orders being given to the Darougas^m, and also to the Rahdars of great cities, not to let any one pass near the frontiers without passports. As these were responsible if any person missed them, they were very vigilant in their duty. The Persians usually travel with their women, and all the furniture necessary to life; under these circumstances it was very difficult for them to escape, had they been sure of bread in foreign climates.

This was one great reason why Julfaⁿ was not totally abandoned by the Armenians. The government of Isfahan, which is reckoned twenty-four leagues long, and as many broad, comprehends the districts of Tchi, Marbin, Kieraridge, Kahab, Baraan, Perhavar, Elkhan, and Roundester. Some of these were formerly well peopled; but now they exhibited only a dreary waste, most of the inhabitants being fled or dispersed: numbers had taken a precarious refuge in the mountains of Loristan; their lands were left untilld, and their houses mouldered into ruins. In short, all the distresses of an unsuccessful war, or the invasion of a barbarous enemy, could not plunge the people into greater misery than the victories of their tyrannical king, who seemed more solicitous to humble his own subjects, than his enemies.

This conduct was not less owing to the little love he bore to the Persians, than to his apprehensions of their seditious spirit, which he dreaded more than the armies of the Indians, Turks,

¹ Rahdar is the term given to those who are fixed at certain posts in the highways, either to examine passengers, or receive toll. According to an antient establishment, they are obliged to support a certain number of men, to patrol and keep the road clear; and upon this account are entitl'd to a tax upon all caravans of merchandize, as well as passengers.

^m Lieutenant of the police.

ⁿ The suburb of Isfahan.

Turks, or Tartars. If he could have cut the Persians off at one stroke, as Caligula wished in regard to the Romans, it is not unreasonable to believe that Nadir would have rejoiced to have done it; had it been possible to re-people the country from any other quarter. Every circumstance of his conduct seemed to prove this; since without altering his measures, which gave such high provocation to rebellion, his chastisements were so extreme, that he was not satisfied without killing or putting out the eyes of all the people, who appeared in arms against him.

During the Course of this year, the Port was agitated with variety of fears, in regard to the armies of Persia. The name of Nadir had spread such a terror on the minds of the Turks six years before, as this period of time had not subdued. The revolt of the Arabians, who often blockaded Bassora, was a further circumstance of alarm, lest these people should join their enemy, for as such they considered Nadir Shah, though he had not yet declared himself.

The conferences held at Erzeroum in January produced no effect. Nadir had ordered his son with a body of fifty thousand men to remain in and about Hamadan, where he caused a great quantity of artillery to be cast. The Turks therefore thought it necessary to keep a numerous body of troops in the confines of Bagdat: but the hopes of accommodation still continuing, the grand signior sent Muriff Effendi into Dagistan, where he desired an audience. Nadir declined entering into this business, but promised the Turkish minister to give him an answer on the plains of Mogan. After his expedition against the Lesgees, he explained himself in some measure, by requiring the restitution of all the provinces in Armenia, Asia Minor, and Georgia; which were formerly conquered by Tamerlane. The Turks were so alarmed at this declaration, that besides the great army which was assembled near Bagdat, another was ordered to meet on the banks of the Euphrates near Erzeroum.

Towards the close of the year, Nadir wrote a letter to the grand signior, couched in general terms, in which he expressed an inclination to cultivate a good understanding with the port. He also wrote to the Basha of Bagdat, making proposals of accommodation in terms, as if the two powers had already been engaged in a war. These steps were considered in no other light, than as a design to lull the court into an easy security; and by no means relieved the inquietude of the sultan and his ministers.

The

The Swedes having declared war the middle of this year against the Russians, they made great solicitations at the Ottoman court, to engage the Turks to break with their enemies, in order to create a powerful diversion in favour of Sweden. The Turks, however, saw the danger on the side of Persia too well, to be drawn into any such snare; especially as they had so lately accommodated their differences; nor did that most remarkable revolution which happened in Russia at the close of the last year, occasion any change in the measures of the Port.

What served to support the spirits of the grand signior, was the reduction of the Zu-Beit and Mudans, two tribes of Arabians, who had revolted. Achmed Bascha finding that these people had offered to put themselves under the protection of Nadir Shah, sent Suliman, his lieutenant ^P, with a considerable body of forces, who defeated those Arabians, and returned home with a rich booty. The Turks have often occasion to use severity on these people, who are naturally turbulent and inconstant. To keep them poor therefore has generally been the best expedient to keep them humble. The successes which Suliman had obtained, were likely to answer a double purpose, by awing these tribes, and by intimidating others.

The Turks were also relieved from their anxiety, with regard to the designs which the Persians might have formed against Bassora. Nadir had caused several magazines of provisions to be collected on the frontiers of that district; but in September he ordered them to be sold. This was a circumstance happy to this city and its neighbourhood in two respects. The war with the Arabians had occasioned a scarcity, while Achmed Bascha not chusing to trust to the professions of his friend Nadir, had amassed great quantities of provisions in those parts, and sent them to Bagdat. This supply was therefore the more welcome to Bassora, where the swelling of the Euphrates had occasioned an inundation, which produced an epidemical disorder.

We have lately seen an instance of the force of gain, with regard to the Russians: the love of it often triumphs over every other consideration. The Turks reaped some benefit from buying of these provisions; but at the same time they sold great numbers of horses in Kourdistan, and other places in the Ottoman dominions, to the Persians. A course of uninterrupted campaigns had so far ruined the Persian cavalry, that they could not have continued the war against the Turks,
without

without these succours: notwithstanding which the avarice of the Basha and governors induced them to connive at the practice, insomuch that this year above sixty thousand horses, besides a great number of camels and mules, were sold by the Turks and Arabians for the use of Nadir's army.

C H A P. LXVI.

Nadir's projects to distress the Turks. Critical circumstances of Achmed, Basha of Bagdat. Nadir leaves Dagistan. Intrigues of the Ottoman court. Nadir sends ambassadors to Bagdat. The grand signior declares war against the Persians. Nadir's plan of operations for the campaign.

THE dread of war still perplexed the affairs of the Ottoman court. That very conformity of religion, which they had so earnestly solicited, in order to prevent the effusion of blood, now became an object of their terror. The decree which Nadir had published upon his accession to the throne, not seeming to operate effectually on the minds of the Persians, towards the close of this year he caused it to be proclaimed, that as he had acknowledged the belief of the Sunnis for the orthodox faith, he required all his subjects to follow his example.

Under the circumstances of fear, this declaration created a suspicion in the Turkish ministry, that it was an artifice of Nadir Shah, by imitating the conduct of Ashreff¹, to taint the minds of the Turks with religious prejudices; and the same success which that prince had met, with regard to his security against the Turks, Nadir might possibly find in his conquest of Turkey.

Achmed, Basha of Bagdat, was critically situated between the powerful and ambitious Nadir, and the jealousy of the Turkish court: the former, tho' he professed himself a friend to the Basha, aspired at the conquest of Bagdat; whilst the latter was concerned to see this government in some degree dismembered from the Ottoman empire. Had Bagdat been in less skillful hands, it might very probably have fallen a sacrifice to the Persians; and yet many of the Turks gave this general the odious appellation of Nizam Al Muluck, in allusion to the treachery which was imputed to that Indian lord, as already related.

In

¹ See Vol. II. Chap. XXXVII.

In whatever light the conduct of the *Basha* might appear to the Port, it was his parts and generosity which supported him, and not his treason. By these he engaged the friendship of almost every one who had any connexion with him: his officers served him with the utmost fidelity, and considered their own fortune as inseparable from his. But this generosity had likewise its mixture of evil, as by this means his coffers were generally empty; insomuch, that he was often obliged to demand money from the court. He had now exacted six hundred purses^r from the Arabians, whom his lieutenant, Suliman *Basha*, had lately defeated. The Jews of Bagdat were also obliged to supply him with two hundred purses. Their chief banker was accused of an illegal commerce with the daughter of a Turkish Emir^r, and would have suffered death, if they had not paid this pecuniary mulct, together with seven hundred purses which was due to the banker from the *Basha*; but this event, whether the Jew was really guilty or not, balanced the account.

The good understanding which was supposed to subsist between Nadir Shah and the governor of Bagdat, gave the Turks no small inquietude. They were in no condition to compel him to give up his government; and out of fear of driving him to any desperate expedient, they dissembled their apprehensions, and worked secretly to accomplish their purpose. Among other steps, the court sent several *Bashas* to Bagdat with troops, under pretence of putting the city in a state of defence against the armies of Persia; but this expedient did not take effect. The *Basha* saw through the disguise which the court put on, and refused to give any admittance to those troops, representing to the grand signior, that his own forces were sufficient to defend the city and its district.

If Achmed could have been supposed capable of joining his forces to Nadir Shah, with a view to conquer Turkey, such a junction was practicable; but if he had no such design, (as indeed how could a man of his parts commit so gross an absurdity?) the conduct of the Ottoman court was very imprudent with regard to her own safety. The circumstances of the *Basha* rendered it necessary, that the grand signior should be

^r 6,000 l.

^r We may observe in how different a light the conduct of the Turks and Persians appears. Formerly, the latter were equally strict with regard to their women, but we find under Nadir's reign, all distinctions of Mahommedan and christian were levelled. See Vol. I. Chap. XLV. It is true the Jews are held in much greater abomination than the christians.

be kept in fear of the Persians, as a decisive blow on either side might oblige him to yield up his government; and it was plain enough that Nadir was preparing for some important enterprize.

Had the Turks been in circumstances of supporting a war against Persia, the perplexed condition in which Nadir found himself in Dagistan, rendered the occasion favourable; however, it was some consolation to them, that the rapid course of his arms had met such a check, as might afford them time to collect troops, and also treasure to support them.

In February this year, Nadir abandoned his enter-
1743. prize on Dagistan; and leaving Derbend, he marched to the plains of Mogan, not without apprehensions that the Turks would make some irruption into his dominions, before he could put himself at the head of his forces.

The grand signior had reason to be persuaded that he never should have a solid peace with Nadir, till he had an opportunity to humble him. The Port was willing to think, that his successes arose from his intrigues, and the force of his bribes, as well as his valour and military knowledge. Upon this principle, they began to consider him as less dangerous, in a presumption that he would have no advantage over them by treasonable practises. Their eyes being also more open to their interest, they saw the fault which they had committed, in losing many favourable opportunities; and prepared in the most effectual manner to take measures to free themselves from any future alarms.

The visier Ali Basha employed all his skill and interest to displace Achmed, Basha of Bagdat: he even carried his resentment so far, as to tamper with Osman Basha, governor of the citadel^t of Bagdat; and to promise him the government of the city and province, if he could by any means remove Achmed. This proposal not being accepted, the visier, according to the ordinary course of eastern intrigues, tried Achmed; and orders were dispatched to him to send the head of Osman. Being surprized at so extraordinary a commission, in prejudice to a man against whom he had no cause of complaint, he acquainted Osman with the affair. This produced an explanation on both sides: the mutual confidence which from thence arose, established their friendship; and they had soon after the pleasure of seeing their enemy dispossessed of his office. Achmed was at length confirmed in his governments, both of Bagdat and Bassora; the grand signior's

^t This officer they call Muhofiz. They have generally governors of citadels distinct from the city and province.

nior's decree for this purpose arriving in April. The court had wisely judged this to be the best expedient, to remove the offence given the Bassha, together with their own jealousy.

It is probable that Nadir made some attempt to corrupt Achmed. The vile principles of other men, which he had so often found subservient to his ends, might have induced him to play off his diabolical engines, and try the efficacy of gold. Myrza Zeki, a person much in the confidence of Nadir, was sent by him to Bagdat, in the character of ambassador to the Bassha, who received him with great demonstrations of kindness, and a profusion of magnificence. The ambassador acquainted the Bassha, that his master intended to make the pilgrimage of Imam Ali, and other places in the neighbourhood of Bagdat, where the Persians were wont to pay their devotions; and that he would send four Khans with troops to escort him. The Bassha could by no means relish this information, as it seemed to conceal some secret design foreign to the pretence of religion; however, in return for the honour which had been done him in this embassy, he sent his kinsman Mahommed Kiaya, to attend the ambassador, also with letters and magnificent presents for Nadir: among the latter were ten beautiful horses richly caparisoned. This embassy produced no other effect, than to confirm that esteem which the Persian king had always expressed for the Bassha.

Whilst these negotiations were carried on, the Port saw the storm ready to burst forth. The eleventh of June the horses tails were hung out of the seraglio at Constantinople as a signal of war. At the same time orders were given to strengthen the Ottoman army on the banks of the Euphrates near Erzeroum. The Persians had already commenced hostilities; and Bassora and Bagdat were invested almost at the same time, the former by a body of thirty thousand Persians, who were joined to some tribes of Arabians. They took immediately the fort of Gurdilan on the side of the river opposite to that city: they also ravaged several small towns and villages, and put many of the inhabitants to the sword, taking their women into slavery. The territories of Bagdat, which were hardly recovered from the calamities they had suffered ten years before, were also pillaged and laid waste.

The Turks however collected a great army on the side of Erzeroum, and another at Diarbekir, and determined to make head against the enemy. The Persian troops which were before Bassora and Bagdat, were therefore ordered to leave those places and join at Mosul, and from thence to advance

vance to Diarbekir. The plan for the operations of the campaign being formed, Nadir himself at the head of a great body of forces marched to Van, with a design to hem in the Turks at Erzeroum, and force them to a battle, and then to attack the Ottoman dominions in two different parts at the same time, and push his conquest as far as the capital. He had been some time making preparations to take the field; but he did not begin the campaign with so much ardour as in his former war against the Turks. The repulse he had met in Dagistan, had in some degree diminished his reputation; whilst the acquisitions which his troops had made in India, rendered them to all appearance less desirous of war.

The love of ease, and the cultivation of the arts of peace, will ever be grateful to mankind; but even success in war must tire and distress. The most fortunate campaigns have generally been attended with great labour, and seldom without the loss of many lives to the victors; yet according to the common notions of mankind, to wade through rivers of blood is the glory of military achievements: so much does a vicious self-love counteract the great designs of providence.

C H A P. LXVII.

The Turks put themselves in a state of defence. The Baſtians and Balouches revolt. The Turks send a pretender into Persia, who is joined by a great body of Lesgees and Persians in Shirvan. They are defeated by the Persian forces under the command of Nefr Ali Myrza. Rebellion of Taghi Khan in Shiras suppressed.

AFTER a campaign of near fourteen years, the ardour of the Persian soldiers began to abate, whilst the Turks recovered from their apprehensions. Mosul was put in a condition of defence, and the Persians endeavoured in vain to make themselves masters of it: they lost a great number of men before the town, and were obliged to raise the siege. Ali Basha, governor of Diarbekir, commanded a numerous army, and had taken all the precautions of an experienced general to stop their progress, had they even succeeded at Mosul; but that blow failing, prudence forbid their advancing any further, whilst an unconquered country remained behind them.

Nadir found the Turks every where prepared for his reception: a number of fortified towns, defended by an enemy become

become brave by their experience, seemed resolved neither to be won by his intrigues, nor to be subdued by the terror of his name. Superiority of numbers, and the mere dint of valour were therefore his only resources; and as he was sensible that his conduct had rendered the Persians every where ripe for a revolt, the loss of a battle would probably have been his ruin. As the Turks kept only on the defensive; the issue of the war could not easily be determined by any decisive blow. Under these circumstances Nadir retired to the neighbourhood of Kerkoud, where the Turks suffered him to remain unmolested.

In the mean while near two thousand families of the Bactiaris, whom the Persian king had transported to the province of Khorasan, returned to their own country; where they retired into the mountains, resolving to shake off the Persian yoke. Nadir being apprehensive that others would follow their example, sent a great body of Ousbegs to keep them in awe. The Balouches also refused to send any further supplies of men or money; and a body of Persian troops, which had marched against them, was defeated.

A great part of the frontier country to the south, and also the inhabitants of the sea coast, finding Nadir's government insupportable, took up arms at the same time: Taghi Khan, the governor of Farsistan, followed their example. This Khan was also a Beglerbeg, and had been much esteemed by Nadir: he was permitted to wear the heron's feather on the left side, and to ride upon an elephant; which was not granted but to two or three persons in the whole empire. The several expeditions which this Khan had made against the Mascats, having been attended with very ill fortune, his reputation with the King was much declined. Khalbelli Khan, a relation of the Shah, and an officer under Taghi Khan, was become so great an object of jealousy to Nadir, that he gave orders to Taghi Khan to send him his head; but the Beglerbeg made use of his interest with his master, and saved Khalbelli. Soon after Taghi Khan himself was suspected of treason; and under pretence of esteem and great confidence, Nadir charged his relation to send the Khan prisoner to the camp. The mutual regard which subsisted between these two lords, naturally produced an explanation; and they both saw that their security depended only on their abilities to oppose the tyrant, whom late disappointments had rendered extremely cruel.

Under these circumstances, they previously concerted their measures, and resolved to rebel. To facilitate this design,

it was agreed that Taghi Khan should set out for the camp, as if he meant to give an account of himself to the Shah; and that Khalbelli should in a day or two send after him, upon the pretext that a rebellion was breaking out, and therefore his presence became absolutely necessary at Shiras. Accordingly the Beglerbeg returned, and under pretence that the neighbouring people had taken up arms against the king, he collected a body of troops to the number of seven thousand, and seized all the naval force on the Persian gulf.

Whilst these storms were gathering in the south, the Turks thought the opportunity very favourable to foment a rebellion in the north. The most proper instruments for their purpose were the Lesgees. The resentment of these people for the attempts against them the preceding year, made them wish for some favourable opportunity of distressing the Persians. The Turkish ministry were sensible that Nadir's government was already become odious; and that possibly any pretender they might set up under the notion of being of the royal blood of the Seffie family, might make a diversion in their favour. For this purpose therefore they engaged a certain Persian named Saun^w, who pretended to be the younger son of Shah Hussein. The Turks also insinuated that Seffie Myrza, the elder son, was yet alive under their protection. Saun had made his appearance in Persia some years before, in the habit of a Dervish, privately insinuating that he affected that garb to conceal his birth: he was then taken by Ibrahim Khan, Nadir's brother, who in contempt cut off the tip of his nose, and set him at liberty. This man was from that time called Binnie Buride', or snip-nose. The inhabitants of Shamakie now received him with great demonstrations of respect, and he soon collected an army to the number of sixteen thousand men, of which the greatest part were Lesgees. These brave mountaineers had made incursions in the neighbourhood of Derbend from the time of Nadir's leaving that city; and kept the garrison in perpetual alarms. Taking the advantage of the night, they laid a quantity of gun-powder in the broken parts of the walls, and setting fire to it, did great mischief, tho' they could not accomplish the taking of the place: this artifice was repeated several times. They often came in large bodies, in the night, and letting fly clouds of arrows at the troops who guarded the walls, immediately changed their situation; so that the Persians were at a loss how to aim their artillery. All the arts of persuasion, as well as violence had been used to bring

^w This word is also pronounced Saam.

bring these Tartars to a submission. The garrison made repeated sallies, and had frequent skirmishes with them; both sides exercising cruelties unwarrantable by the law of arms*. Those who surrendered themselves without fighting, and promised under an oath not to bear arms against the Shah, were dismissed by the Persians. A decree was also sent amongst the Lesgees, that whoever would trade with Persia, should be free of all duties, and that passports should be granted for the safety of their persons; but this had little or no effect.

The continuation of these hostilities kept Derbend almost in as great distress as when Nadir left it. All the males who were above sixteen, were obliged to bear arms, and the young women above fourteen, were given as wives to the new recruits, by an arbitrary act of the governor; whilst the scarcity was so great, that numbers died for want.

The beginning of this year the pretender Saun marched into Shirvan, at the head of an army mostly ¹⁷⁴⁴ composed of Lesgees. They were pillaging at large, when a body of two thousand Persians in Nadir's interest, endeavoured to stop their progress, but were intirely routed. The whole province being thus threatened with desolation, Nadir sent his son Nefr Ali Myrza at the head of twenty five thousand men. The Lesgees, in conjunction with great numbers of people of the province, made an obstinate resistance; but after much bloodshed they were defeated near the conflux of the Kura and Aras. It was here Nadir was chosen king; and on the same spot, where the people had given such proof of their weakness and corruption, was now erected a monument of their misery and distress. Nadir caused a pyramid of human heads[†] to be built in token of his victory, and to deter the few remaining inhabitants from any future rebellion.

Saun fled with seventy men only, but was soon taken. The Shah ordered his son to cut out one of the eyes of this rebel, and that he should be then sent to the Ottoman court, with this message; "That Nadir disdained to take the life of "so despicable a wretch, though the grand signior had espoused his cause, as a descendent of the family of the Sessies*."

N n 2

The

* It was not uncommon for the Persians to cut off the legs of the Lesgees, or to cut out their eyes, with this cruel taunt, that they might then make the best of their way home.

† See Vol. I. Chap. LVIII.

* It was remarkable, that Saun was thus suffered to escape for the second time. He was a rank predestinarian, and concluded that he was yet reserved for some extraordinary event.

The consequence of this rebellion was the ruin of almost the whole province of Shirvan. In the mean while, the revolt of Taghi Khan became a very serious affair; he was one of the last of the antient Persian nobility, and tho' he had been unfortunate in his naval war against the Arabs, he had the reputation of an able statesman and a gallant officer; qualities which rendered him so much the greater object of jealousy. Nadir detached a body of eighteen thousand ^a men to Shiras, under some of his most experienced generals. This was a force so much superior to that of Taghi Khan, that being in no capacity to meet them in the field, he shut himself up in the city.

We have already seen, to what deplorable circumstances the city of Shiras, the capital of Farsistan, was reduced in 1724, and again in 1729: it was now once more doomed to be a scene of distress and slaughter. Taghi Khan defended the city for some weeks, but at length it was taken by storm: the inhabitants were punished with the utmost severity; and a great part of their effects were pillaged, under the pretence of sequestration, for the use of the king. Most of those who had been in arms were put to the sword, or deprived of sight. Taghi Khan, attended by a party of his friends, fled in the disguise of shepherds, but were soon discovered by the treachery of their own servants. He was brought to Isfahan with his favourite wife, and about forty of his nearest relations and dependents.

This lady was violated before her husband's face by a common soldier; which was the highest indignity that could be offered to this nobleman, and contrary to Nadir's usual regard to women. His relations and friends were put to death; and himself, after being deprived of one of his eyes, was castrated. Strict orders were given, that all possible care should be taken, that the operation should not affect his life. It was said, that Nadir had made an oath ^b never to put Taghi-Khan to death; and was therefore wanton in his cruelty, without touching the life of this lord. It is probable, that the Shah thought him an honest man, and a more able general, than many belonging to his army; and as he had given him his life, expected from him the greater marks of fidelity. Upon what

^a The twenty-five thousand men, mentioned in Vol. I. Page, 208. part of them I imagine were sent against the other rebels in that neighbourhood.

^b It seems as if oaths were deemed very sacred things among the Mahomedans, and that the vilest of men were not vile enough to disregard their engagements, to which they call the Almighty to witness.

what other principle can we reconcile Nadir's conduct; who, after thus gratifying his resentment, gave this Khan the government of Cabul? What particular circumstances might induce him to take so extraordinary a resolution, my authorities do not mention: it seems to be an effect of that caprice and whim, which we find upon many occasions, as if he affected to establish a rule of conduct, contrary to the fundamental principles which common experience has taught mankind.

C H A P. LXVIII.

Rebellion of Astrabad. English merchants plundered. Nadir returns from Turkey into Persia. Report concerning his abdication. Distress of Persia. The Turks make great preparations for war. Nadir marches into the Turkish dominions. Battle fought near Erivan. The Turks defeated.

THE flames of civil war now spread themselves like a torrent. In January this year, the Khajars of Astrabad also threw off the yoke, and chose Mahommed Hassan^d as their leader. After joining a body of Turkuman Tartars their neighbours, they took the capital of the province, seized the Shah's treasure, and plundered a valuable caravan belonging to the British Russia company, who were at this time attempting to open a new trade over the Caspian sea to Mesched, now considered as the capital of the empire.

There cannot be a greater demonstration of the fatal effects of a tyrannical government, than the extreme rashness of the inhabitants of this province. Mahommed Hassan had held a correspondence with Saun, and acknowledged him as

N n 3

sovereign.

^c Mr. Otter mentions, that Taghi Khan no sooner arrived at Cabul, than he rebelled; but I never heard that Cabul did rebel till after the death of Nadir Shah, or just before, when Thamaras Khan commanded the Persian forces on the Indian side. It is true, that many events have happened, which for want of correspondence, and from the wild disorders of a country rent with civil wars, have never reached Europe. I have already observed, that for my own part I adopt only what I have particular reason to believe is true, and those events which appear but imperfectly related, with regard to circumstances, the reader will ascribe to the manner in which they have been handed to us.

^d The son of Fatey Ali Khan, mentioned in page 342.

sovereign. He proposed, that whilst Saun was conquering on the western coast, he would reduce the southern parts bordering on the Caspian sea. It was with difficulty he raised a little army of three thousand men; and Saun, tho' he headed sixteen thousand, was not able to support himself against the numerous forces of Nadir; yet the temptation of plundering the treasure and caravan, drew the infatuated followers of Hassan into destruction. The minute circumstances of this rebellion are related in my first volume*. I have therefore only to add, that this army of Khajars and Turkumans were in the following month defeated by fifteen hundred of the Shah's troops from Khorasan; and by their loss in battle, executions, and sequestrations, the whole province was ruined. From this time Nadir took the resolution of sending a body of forces, and to build a fort on the eastern coast of the Caspian, with a view to awe the Turkumans; but the want of water in their desert prevented the execution†.

Whether reasons of policy, or any other motive prevailed, Nadir certainly gave frequent proof of his regard to equity; and there is a justice due to the worst of men. That which was shewn on this occasion to the British merchants, ought to be remembered; for he caused the whole amount of their loss to be paid to their factors.

The fortune of this eastern spoiler seemed now to decline very fast: and the general defection of the Persians rendered the prospect of his future reign very gloomy. The flames of rebellion, which thus broke out in so many different quarters, reduced him for the present to the necessity of abandoning his designs against the Turks; and in the month of March this year‡, he returned into the plains of Hamadan.

It is not said whether Nadir had any children by the aunt of Shah Tæhmas; but his unfortunate son Riza Kouli Myrza, to whom a sister of that prince had been given in marriage, had a son by her, whose name was Shahrokh, now about ten years of age. It was suggested that Nadir designed to abdicate the regal power in favour of Shahrokh, as being lineally descended on the mother's side from the Seffie family, and that himself would retire to Kælat to end his days in repose. This opinion seemed to arise rather from the confused state of affairs than from the probability that Nadir really meant to abdicate the crown, or that he could consistently with his own safety give up the command of his army.

* Chapters XXX. XLII. XLVI.

† See Vol. I. Chap. XLVIII.

‡ See Vol. I. Chap. XXXVI.

my. Nor was it probable that Shahrokh, who was born in such distracted times, whose father had been deprived of sight for rebellion against his own parent, and whose mother had poisoned herself, to avoid the cruel death of several of her relations, who were ripped up; it is not, I say, probable, that such a person, however entitled by birth, should ever arrive at a quiet possession of the regal dignity.

Under such distraction of the state, and the jealousy of the usurper, to name a successor would have been to dethrone himself in his own apprehension. Every thoughtful Man foresaw^e what confusion must necessarily follow the death of Nadir, although this event was so much desired by the people. It was most natural to imagine, that as Nadir had put out the eyes of his eldest son Riza Kouli Myrza, the second son Nezir Ali Myrza, should be considered as the presumptive heir of the Persian diadem. This prince however gave no marks of a spirit equal to so dangerous a charge. Ali Kouli Khan, the son of Ibrahim Khan^b, was therefore considered as the person most probable to succeed. This opinion was favoured by his being made governor of Khorasan, and by a certain popularity of conduct, not such as gave umbrage at this time, but tending to make impressions of his generosity.

I have related in what miseryⁱ Persia was involved by Nadir's avarice, joined to a restless spirit of conquest, and a fear of disbanding his army. In the most civilized countries we often find, that after a long series of war peace is attended with many evil effects, especially from the lawless conduct of those who want skill, industry, or honesty to get their bread. But in a country so lost to a sense of moral duties, and so impatient under the yoke of an usurper, Nadir's soldiers would have been the first to rebel, as soon as they should be discharged. They already cursed him, not in their hearts only, but with their tongues; declaring, that he had no sense of humanity, and therefore his talents as a soldier could never render him worthy to reign over them: be-

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sides,

^e I have often discoursed on the subject with the French jesuits in Ghilan, who foretold a great part of the calamities, which have since happened, as a natural consequence of that desperate state to which Persia was reduced.

^b Ibrahim Khan, Nadir's eldest brother, the same person who was killed by the Lesgees. It was said that Nadir did declare Ali Kouli Khan his successor; but the authority is the more to be doubted, as the thing appears inconsistent, whilst Nezir Ali Myrza had so great a share in the command of the army.

ⁱ Vol. I. Chap. XXXIV.

sides, the native Persians in his army were much inferior to the number of the Tartars, and consequently the former considered themselves as acting under the influence of men whom they despised. The people in general, grown desperate by seeing their substance torn from them, were kept from rebellion no longer than they were awed by a military force. Yet they were reduced to so hard a dilemma, as to tremble at the prospect of a change.

Such was the situation of Persia in the middle of this year, when nothing could give a stronger proof how much mankind are scourges to themselves in consequence of their own villainy, than that a people who had been regardless of their lawful king, now groaned under the tyranny of an usurper who trod on their necks with such boundless cruelty. Nor was it less amazing how a country almost deserted, could find provisions to supply an army.

It is easy to imagine the satisfaction which the Port received at the rebellions in Persia: this made a discovery of the real weakness of their enemy. They were still alarmed on account of Achmed Basha: the reluctance he had shewn to act against the Persians, by which he designed to maintain himself the better in his government, was construed by his enemies at court as a desertion of his master's cause; and consequently that he meant at least to erect an independent sovereignty.

The Turks, harrassed with war for so many years, grew clamorous, and a change in the ministry was threatened. Their fears perpetually represented Nadir Shah as destroying their armies, and laying waste their country, without a prospect of peace. The court endeavoured by all possible means to soothe the people: it was even declared that a peace was concluded with Persia, by the interposition of Achmed Basha. The design of this was to remove the suspicions which were entertained of this Basha, and at the same time to give the people hopes of repose. The court however had experienced such caprice, inconstancy, and want of faith in Nadir, that they could make no dependence on any treaty with him, but such as was made sword in hand. Many projects were formed to bring vast armies into the field: it was even proposed to embark some bodies of the Crim Tartars on the Black Sea, and land them at Trebisonde; and to bring troops from Egypt, and land them at Alexandretta, to endeavour by this means to cover their dominions in the antient Mesopotamia. In short, all possible expedients were tried to set bounds

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bounds to so dangerous a neighbour, whose fortune had prevailed over the numerous rebellions raised against him.

In July Nadir marched back again into the Turkish dominions, seemingly with a view to support his troops in the enemy's country, which he could no longer do in his own. All the frontier of the Turkish dominions had been so long a prey to great armies, that they were become waste. In the mean while, the taxes drawn from his people being insufficient for the current service, he was obliged to have recourse to his Indian treasure, but in such small proportions, as afforded very little relief to the people.

Nadir remained some time between Casbin and Hamadan, with an army of thirty thousand men; with these he awed his subjects, particularly the inhabitants of the coast of the Caspian, who were in general ripe for a revolt. In this situation he could also support a correspondence with his armies on the side of India, and with that body of forces which he had left near Kerkoud. In the mean time he expected to be joined by his forces which had been sent to the south against Shirafs, and the neighbouring country.

Towards the close of this year, an action happened between the Persians and Turks near Cars; but as it was by no means decisive, it served for little more than to support the spirit of animosity, and prevent that peace which the Turkish ministry so anxiously sought: at least we do not find that the Persians were driven out of the Turkish dominions, nor that Cars was taken, agreeable to the common reports of that time. The Turks however maintained their ground with such resolution, as rendered all the attempts of the enemy abortive.

The Persian army passed the winter near their own frontiers. Nadir seemed to think it necessary to keep himself in readiness against the intestine commotions of his own country, and at the same time to watch the motions of the Turks, who were resolved to make their greatest efforts the next campaign.

Near the end of this year, Achmed Khan, a Persian general, fled to Constantinople from the tyranny of his master. The Turks received him with diffidence, lest his pretended flight should be one of those stratagems which their artful enemy Nadir had so often played against them. The Khan however gave them such convincing proofs of the real cause of his abandoning his late master, that he was received into the confidence of the Turkish ministers. He flattered them into a belief, that if they would exert themselves, and send a large

large army into the field, the Persians, being once intimidated, would desert in whole squadrons. This opinion was founded on his knowledge of the great disaffection of many of the officers and soldiers in the Persian army.

The Lesgees, remembering their defeat in Shirvan the beginning of last year, were anxious to see their haughty enemy humbled to the dust. For this purpose they sent two ambassadors to Constantinople, offering to assist the Turks with a body of men, in consideration of a certain sum of money. They represented at the same time, how bravely they had defended their liberty against the usurper Nadir, and that they still persisted in their resolution of defending themselves. It had not been the custom of the Lesgees for some ages to leave their mountains to engage in the service of any foreign prince, nor have they often marched farther than Shirvan and Georgia to fight their own battles; but their present circumstances induced them to make this offer, to engage in the Turkish service, as the Swifs do in that of France. The Port received these ambassadors with great marks of distinction, and gave them very fair Promises; but we do not find that they were so satisfactory to the crafty Lesgees, as to engage them to send any succours to join the Ottoman army: indeed it was not without the utmost difficulty the grand signior could raise money to pay his national troops.

1745. This year began with preparations for the most powerful army which had yet appeared in the field against the Persians, towards which Servia, Bosnia, and Romania, all contributed their quotas. This numerous army was to be assembled at Cars, in order to open the campaign by the first of April. The Turks seemed thus determined to make the most vigorous efforts, and free themselves from the dread of their enemy; which could not be done by keeping within their walls. This task was the more difficult, as a continued series of ill fortune had intimidated the Ottoman forces; neither were the European troops in the least disposed to pass over into Asia, as it had generally proved their grave.

In the mean while, the suppression of the rebellions of Shirvan, Shirafs, and Astrabad, had humbled the Persians: though, groaning under a tyrannical government, they were in no condition to withhold their obedience. Nadir being satisfied that he had nothing to fear from his own people for the present, left his son Nefr Ali Myrza with a body of thirty thousand men on the frontiers of Persia, and marched his
army

army the beginning of this year into Georgia, where he found it most easy to support them, without any danger of molestation. This step gave the Turks some satisfaction, as it enabled them to form their army; and afforded a temporary relief to those towns, against which they apprehended the Persian king would turn his arms.

If the Turks were ambitious of striking a decisive blow, Nadir also behaved as if he meant to bring the war to an issue at one battle: for he took no measures to obstruct the junction of the Ottoman forces. About the middle of May he sent orders to his son to advance towards Erivan, and near the end of July both the Persian armies arrived in the neighbourhood of that city.

Two years thus passed in rumours of war, and perpetual apprehensions of battles, without any blow being struck worthy of historical record: at length the fatal day arrived. The Turks, having had so long a time to compleat their army, their forces were more numerous than in any of the former campaigns against the Persians: the Seraskier, Mahommed Basfa, was at the head of a hundred thousand men. As soon as he heard of the motions of the Persians, he left Erzeroum, and advanced to Cars, where he joined Abdallah Kouproli: the army under this Basfa consisted of thirty thousand men. The junction of these forces, supported by a numerous train of artillery, flattered the Turks into a belief, that it was now their turn to triumph over an enemy who had been so long an object of their terror. Mahommed Basfa directed his course towards Erivan, and during his march, he drove several parties, consisting of four or five thousand Persians, from their entrenchments and advanced posts.

Nadir Shah was encamped with fifty thousand men about ten leagues from Erivan, and his son, Nezir Ali Myrza, with thirty thousand, was advanced near the same distance. The van guard of the latter being met by the Turks, a skirmish ensued, and the Persians immediately retreated to join the main army commanded by the Shah himself. Upon this, Nadir began to move, and sent a body of his forces to attack the Turks in the rear, which was executed according to his intention. Being arrived within two leagues of the enemy's camp, he pitched his tents on a rising ground, nearest that body of the Turks commanded by Abdallah Basfa. The main body of the Ottoman army was encamped advantageously, and defended by entrenchments, and a numerous artillery.

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Mahommed Bascha had made some marches to meet the king of Persia, with design to give him battle. The third of August he detached a large body of cavalry, supported by a train of artillery; these troops being formed into order of battle, advanced upon the Persians, whilst the Bascha kept his whole army in readiness to succour them. Nadir gave orders for a detachment of his troops, inferior in number to that of the Turks, to meet them; and after the first discharge of their musquetry, to attack them with their sabres. The battle lasted from morning 'till noon with equal fortune, when the Shah advanced in Person at the head of a strong reinforcement, and brought on a general engagement. The Turks disputed the victory with great obstinacy, but in the evening they retired to their camp in confusion. They lost above twenty thousand men, great part of them infantry, who were killed in the field of battle, besides a considerable number of prisoners. The Persians pursued them as far as their trenches, and then returned to their own camp a little after sun-set.

A loss of such importance could not but dishearten the Turks, who now seemed inclined to remain within their lines. The Shah, taking advantage of the terror into which he had thrown the enemy, cut off their communication with Cars; by which means they were deprived of a support. Necessity therefore compelled them to leave their trenches a second time, not so much with design to give battle, as to make a desperate retreat. The eighth of August they advanced with a large train of artillery, and cannonaded the enemy with great fury. The Persians supported the shock, and by the help of their own cannon drove them back into their trenches. The Turks being now more closely blockaded in their camp; the ninth of August, as soon as night came on, they abandoned their entrenchments, and leaving their artillery and baggage, retreated towards Cars.

Nadir no sooner perceived their motions than he ordered a body of his men to follow them. The Persians flung them into disorder, and made great havock: the next day as they followed the Turks, five leagues on the other side the river Arpatfchai, a forced engagement ensued, in which the Seraskier, Mahommed Bascha, was slain. The Persians then returned in triumph to their camp with five thousand prisoners, and the head of the Seraskier. The Turks acknowledged their loss upon the whole to be twenty-eight thousand men, and three Baschas, besides the commander in chief; among these was Abdallah Kouproli, the son of the Seraskier

Kouproli.

Kouproli, who was killed in an engagement with the victorious Nadir nine years before.

It is remarkable, that Nadir proceeded in this action with the utmost caution, not suffering any of his troops to enter the Turkish camp after the enemy had deserted it, till he was certain that this was no stratagem to engage his men to plunder, and expose them to be attacked at a disadvantage. The loss of the Persians on the occasion of this victory was about eight thousand men, and some of their generals : Nadir himself had two horses killed under him in the first battle.

The remains of the Turkish army arrived at Cars without baggage, artillery or ammunition, and without any order, discipline, or commanders of any note, so that the hopes of the whole campaign were frustrated ; and their enemies remained masters of the field. However, they had less to fear from this event than from their former misfortunes in the Persian war, since they had the utmost reason to hope that the farther Nadir marched into their country, the more he would be distressed by the rebellions which were ready to burst forth on every side of his Persian dominions. The Turkish ministry therefore still persisted in supporting the war ; and in December following the port published a manifesto setting forth the reasons of this resolution, in order to convince the people of the necessity of this measure, till Nadir Shah should accept proposals of peace less dangerous and dishonourable to the Ottoman empire than any he had offered. To confirm their resolution, the grand visier sent orders that all the troops in Natolia should hold themselves in readiness to march, in order to join the army at Cars.

C H A P. LXIX.

Nadir makes a peace with the Turks. The Russians send an ambassador to Nadir. Revolt of the Georgians. Nadir's barbarities at Isfahan and Kherman. Revolt of Thamaras Khan, and Ali Kouli Khan.

NADIR saw too well the danger impending from intestine commotions in Persia, to entertain any thoughts of pursuing his victories against the Turks : he rather chose to enter into as speedy an accommodation with them as possible. For this purpose he sent Ali Beg, with a retinue of sixty persons, as ambassador to the grand signior. The 17th of January this minister was conducted with the ordinary ceremonies

remonies to an audience of the Ottoman emperor, who received him with great marks of respect. The visier at the same time informed him, that he might be assured, notwithstanding the misfortunes they had met with in the war with Persia, unless the Shah would make propositions more consistent with the honour of the grand signior, it would be impossible to agree to a peace. As this ambassador had no full powers to negotiate, but was chiefly charged with a letter expressing the good intentions of his master: the grand signior replied, that he was sincerely disposed to conclude a peace, as soon as the Shah would agree to such terms as might render it solid and lasting; and that in conformity to the Shah's proposals of friendship, he would immediately order plenipotentiaries to the frontiers of Persia: that these, together with Ali Basha the Seraskier who commanded at Cars, might agree with the Shah on a place most convenient to open the conferences. Accordingly, towards the close of

1746. February, three ministers were dispatched a few days before the departure of the Persian ambassador from Constantinople. In order that these conferences should produce their effect, directions were given to hasten the preparations for the next campaign, in case Nadir should, according to his ordinary practice, amuse the Turks with the notions of an accommodation, whilst he meant only to gain time for pursuing the war with the more vigour when it better suited his convenience.

It is very evident that he had no desire of peace with the Turks, any otherwise than as his own preservation rendered it necessary. In the beginning of the last campaign he had declared in very familiar terms, what mighty presents he would make his soldiers, after he had set up his standard on the ramparts of Constantinople; a project not altogether improbable, could he have found the art of sacrificing his avarice to his ambition, and by that means deliver his people from the miseries under which they groaned.

It was remarkable in all the wars which Nadir waged against the Ottoman empire, that the European Turks no sooner entered Asia, than they became enervated. Besides, the cloathing of the Turks being so much longer than that of the Persians, the former were under a very great disadvantage in battle^{*}; and yet, such is the reverence of mankind for the practice of their forefathers, or their jealous fears of changing

^{*} The Turks I am told have a method of tucking up their garments, but still they are not so much disengaged as the Persians.

changing for the worst, that we find the Turks still adhere to the same military dress. In Europe, where superstition does not so much abound, or at least is differently modified, the custom of loading soldiers with unnecessary cloathing is changed¹, in almost every country distinguished for the knowledge of military affairs. To all appearance Nadir would have continued superior to the Turks, unless he had pushed his fortune too far, as generally is the case with princes of his genius; but Providence sets the bounds, which they have not the prudence to fix.

After the battle of Erivan, Nadir marched to Hamadan, to wait the arrival of the Turkish ministers, who were sent to prepare the way for Mustapha Effendi, the grand signior's ambassador. In order to prevent the evasive conduct which Nadir had ordinarily practised towards the Turks, this ambassador was ordered to return to Constantinople before the year expired. The Port, sensible in what circumstances the Shah was, had just grounds to believe that the happy period was at length arrived, in which they might agree to fix the boundaries of their respective dominions; and prevent that distress and effusion of blood, in which the ambition of the Persian king had involved the Ottoman empire.

Ali Beg, the ambassador of Nadir Shah, set out towards the end of March, a few days after Mustapha Effendi. He left the Turkish court, with a view to make report to his master of the favourable sentiments of the grand signior, with regard to their mutual tranquillity. In the mean while, fresh reinforcements were sent to Cars and Erzeroum, in order to give the greater weight to their negotiations. The Turks seemed resolved to suffer the inconvenience of supporting a very numerous army, rather than afford occasion to Nadir for making any exorbitant demands on them. The expence of maintaining these forces on the frontiers of their Asiatic dominions was very great, the country being every where laid waste; yet this step seemed to be absolutely necessary, whilst Nadir was at the head of so formidable an army.

The greatest part of this year passed in negotiations, till at length Mustapha Effendi brought this important affair to a happy issue; and a peace was concluded, upon the foundation of that of Amurath IV. except that the Persians were to enjoy the liberty of making the pilgrimage of Mecca, without acknowledging the Turkish jurisdiction; and to have also a liberty to establish a Persian priest at the town of Mesched Ali, near Bagdat. The titles which Nadir assumed upon

¹ See Page, 534.

on this occasion were, "The most exalted and most generous prince; brilliant as the moon, and resplendent as the sun. The jewel of the world; the center of the beauty of musfulmen, and of the true faith of Mahommed. The sovereign, whose troops are equal in number to the stars, and who sits on the throne of Xerxes."

The grand signior, not to be out-done in pomp of words, arrogated the titles of "The sovereign who is the shadow of God; the mirror of justice; the asylum of the true believers; the king of kings, whose troops are equal in number to the stars; the true successor of the Caliphs; the servant of the two sacred and noble cities^m; the lord of the two countries, and of the two seasⁿ; sultan, son of a sultan; the most powerful, the most formidable, most magnificent, most generous emperor Sultan Mahommed the conqueror, son of Mustapha the conqueror^o."

The Seraskier, Ali Basha, who commanded on the frontier of Persia, was ordered to return into Europe, to take possession of his government of Bosnia. The grand signior's court was in great joy on account of this peace; especially as Nadir declared himself an adherent to the doctrine of Hannifa, in opposition to those expounders of the Mahomedan law, whose opinion the Persians had generally adopted. The renovation of their treaty with the courts of St. Peterburgh and Vienna, added also to the satisfaction, and induced them to believe it would be permanent. The next great object of their attention, was the preparation of a splendid embassy to Isfahan, near which city Nadir was encamped with his forces. In the mean while, the Persian monarch appointed Mustapha Khan his ambassador to the grand signior.

We have already observed that the Russian court had not yet sent any formal embassy to Nadir, since his accession to the throne of Persia: it was therefore thought high time to perform this ceremonial, and obviate the ill effects which a seeming disregard might produce, now that Nadir had no foreign enemy against whom to employ his forces. The impressions which the Russians as well as the Turks had conceived, prevented in a great measure the belief that the fate of this mighty conqueror was so near at hand. Knez Galitzen

^m Mecca and Medina.

ⁿ Generally understood the Caspian and Black Seas.

^o This treaty was not signed till the 11th of January 1747.

zen was accordingly appointed ambassador on the part of her present imperial majesty of Russia ^p.

Nadir having left his northern dominions, sent into Georgia to demand all the sons of their nobility to attend his camp. A step of this nature could not but give these brave people great offence, especially as it seemed to indicate his jealousy of them, and that he meant to hold their sons as hostages, with a view to retain the people in their obedience. The Georgians resolved to take up arms rather than submit; and to this they were the more induced, by the reports that the flames of rebellion had reached the eastern parts of Persia. Thus encouraged, they repulsed a body of Persian troops, which were sent into their country to levy taxes, and keep them in awe.

Whilst Nadir was in the neighbourhood of Isfahan, he received intelligence that a rebellion was breaking out in the borders of Khorasan. This province, which had received such distinguished marks of his favour, was reduced to the same degree of misery as the other parts of the empire ^q: but the Abdolrees of Herat were the most impatient of the yoke. Under these circumstances, what could be expected from the cruel avaricious Nadir? From an incessant fatigue and labour of mind, attended with some infirmities of body, he had contracted a disposition, which in the generality of mankind is called by the name of peevishness, but in him was a diabolical fierceness, with a total insensibility of human sufferings. His avidity, as common to sickly minds, increased with his years; and in order to indulge it, he seemed resolved to perform some master-stroke of cruelty. During his stay at Isfahan, he committed barbarities beyond any of the former years of his reign. This antient city, long esteemed the paradise of the Persian monarchy, had in common with all Persia felt the fatal consequences of invasions and civil wars. The tyranny of Nadir had made a great progress in that ruin, which he now seemed determined to compleat. He made the heaviest exactions on the city and the adjacent country, and put to death numbers of the inhabitants: among these were several Indian and Armenian merchants, whom he caused to be burnt alive. It was pretended that they had bought some horse caparisons belonging to Shah Hussein, from which they had cut off the pearls, without accounting with him for their full value. However true this might be,

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^p See account of this embassy, Vol. I. Chapters LIV. LV. LVI. and LVIII.

^q See Vol. I. Chap. LXV.

it could not be deemed a sufficient reason for such barbarities. It is probable, that he suspected the Armenians held a correspondence with the rebel Georgians; and that the Indians in their commerce with Kandahar, might take occasion to mention the state of affairs in the northern and western parts of the empire.

In January 1747 he left Isfahan, and marched 1747. with his forces to Kherman. Here his cruelties were not inferior to those he had exercised at Isfahan; being restrained by no ties of justice, nor the tears of the miserable; by no regards of hospitality, nor even the protection due to strangers: among other outrages, he caused the interpreter of the Dutch factors to be beaten with sticks, after the Persian manner, till he expired; pretending, that a Persian of distinction had deposited in his hands a large sum of money.

From Kherman he proceeded to Mesched, where he continued to practise the greatest barbarities; few persons of any note, whether military men or merchants, Persians or Armenians, escaped without the loss of one or both their eyes. He then directed his course to Kælat, the grand repository of his treasure. It was imagined, that he intended to put things in readiness for his reception in that strong place, after the execution of his projects.

Upon the breaking out of the rebellion in the province of Herat, he had given orders to his nephew Ali Kouli Khan, then at Mesched, to march against the Abdollees with a large body of forces; strictly enjoining him, that whatever the exigencies of affairs might be, not to unite his troops with those of Tamaras Khan. The latter commanded in the eastern frontiers, and was reputed a man of great experience and knowledge of war: he also had the same injunction with regard to Ali Kouli Khan; however, they entered into a correspondence, which produced a mutual regard, and terminated in the junction of their forces.

Nadir was thus extremely alarmed; it seemed as if he was betrayed on every side, and most of all by his own nephew. Things being thus circumstanced, he wrote to Ali Kouli Khan, to send Tamaras Khan to him as a prisoner; and apprehensive that his nephew might not obey those commands, soon after he sent orders to Tamaras Khan, to arrest his nephew, and send him to his camp. Neither of these orders were obeyed; on the contrary, a mutual communication of them

It is said that this Khan had formed a regiment of infantry after the European manner.

them produced a firmer union, and more vigorous measures for their security.

When Nadir found that neither of these generals were obedient, and that the junction of their forces rendered them at least as formidable as the royal army, he tried a further expedient to separate them, which was to send a message to his nephew, conceived in very gentle terms, desiring him to come to his camp. Ali Kouli Khan excused himself, alledging that the rebellion was not suppressed, and consequently his absence would be attended with dangerous consequences. In the mean while Tamaras Khan had the same invitation, and pleaded want of health.

C H A P. LXX.

Nadir marches to Mesched; and from thence to the plains of Sultan Meydan. He intends to massacre part of his own army, but is himself assassinated. Dispersion of the Persian army. Motives of Nadir's supposed intention of a massacre. Reflection on his death.

IN this critical situation of affairs, Nadir took the resolution of marching to Mesched, where he arrived towards the end of May. Those who had escaped the barbarity of his officers, became the objects of his avarice, which was aggravated to a wanton fierceness in every species of cruelty. He then marched into the plains of Sultan Meydan, a day's journey to the north-west of Mesched. Here it is said he called before him some of the chiefs of the Ousbegs, Turkumans, and other Tartars, who composed a great part of his army, and having sworn them to secrecy and obedience, he disclosed his design of putting to the sword all the Persians in his camp; and that he would play off a skyrocket at twelve in the night, as a signal to begin the massacre: that when this work was done, he would load them with money and great honours; proposing, after he had erected a huge pyramid of Persian heads, to retire and end his days at Kælat.

A Georgian slave in Nadir's tent accidentally overheard some part of the conference, in which this bloody plot was resolved on. He immediately found means to discover the secret to the Kurtchi Bashî, who when Night approached sent for several of the principal Persian officers of the army, and communicated this extraordinary piece of intelligence.

They immediately dispatched scouts to observe the motions of the Tartars, many of whom were reported to be whetting their sabres, as if some expedition was intended. Minds deeply tinged with jealousy soon take alarm; the least intimation of a design so horrid as this, might confirm their belief of it. Under this fatal extremity, what resolution could be taken but that Nadir himself should die?

Saleh Beg, an officer of great intrepidity, and colonel of the body guard of Afshars, offered his Service for this purpose, and demanded only four chosen men as followers. The usual time of Nadir's going to rest being past, and a few hours before the signal for the intended massacre, Saleh Beg and his followers, under a pretence of urgent business, with some kind of violence passed the guard; and rushing into the outward partition of the harram met an eunuch, whom they dispatched. From thence they proceeded into the harram, where they met an old woman, whom they also killed. They were yet at a loss in which of the tents^c Nadir slept, till by the light of a lamp they discovered some jewels: here they rushed in and found him. Either he had not yet slept, or was awakened by the cries of the woman, and rose from his bed. When the assassins approached him, Nadir drew his sabre, and demanded what business they had: Saleh Beg made no answer, but immediately cut him with his sabre on the left side of his collar-bone. This did not prevent the Shah's collecting force sufficient to kill two of the soldiers who came up to him to finish their leader's business. He was then retiring out of his tent, when the cords of it tripped him, and Saleh Beg gave him a mortal wound. Nadir cry'd, "Mercy, and I will forgive you all;" to which this officer reply'd, "You have not shewn any mercy, and therefore
"merit none."

Saleh Beg having performed this important business, cut off Nadir's head. The Tartars, to whom the tyrant had always shewn a distinguished preference, no sooner heard that he was killed, than they expressed the highest resentment, and took to their arms; upon which a general pillage and confusion ensued: in several quarters of the army they attacked the Persians, at once to revenge the death of their general, and afford the better opportunity of plunder^d; so that
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^c There are many tents within one common inclosure.

^d I have never been able to get any information concerning those large jewels which ornamented the five sets of horse-furniture belonging to Nadir. It is probable they were pillaged, or buried and lost on this occasion.

before daylight above five thousand men on both sides were slain. The body of the slaughter'd Nadir was then produced ; the Tartars insisted on seeing his head also, and being satisfied that he was really dead, the whole army dispersed. Some of them joined the forces of Ali Kouli Khan, who at that time was at no great distance. Others sought their respective homes, if such homes could then be found after so great a change of affairs, and after a continued campaign for eighteen years.

It is more than possible that a massacre of the Persians in Nadir's army was really intended, however incredible the thing may appear. Massacres have been known even in the christian world, for the purposes of zeal, ambition, or false glory. The affair of Dehlie is a proof that such a thought was not strange to the mind of Nadir. It is natural for mankind to propose some end to themselves, as the reward of their labours ; which can be no other than the enjoyment of rest. This happens even to men who are formed only for action, and upon the trial enjoy no satisfaction in rest ; so much does the mind long for some change in which life may become more grateful. Nadir's avarice was no longer supportable ; he had filled up the measure of his iniquities ; he had ruined Persia ; he had lost the affections of his subjects, to a degree that converted all their sentiments of obedience into a thirst of revenge, which they only wanted an opportunity to gratify ; he knew this, and had no sensibility of their sufferings. By the strength of his own understanding, he might easily foresee his fate approaching, if he did not take some desperate means to prevent it. His nephew and Tamaras Khan, or himself, must fall ; unless he could secure a safe retreat in Kælat. This was hardly possible, whilst he was surrounded by numbers who sought his destruction, and would carry their wishes into execution, upon the least diminution of his authority.

Many reasons may be assigned, why such a man under such circumstances, should have recourse to this expedient : since the complicated motives of revenge and cruelty, with despair of his own preservation on other terms, might suggest it to him. On the other hand there are many circumstances which do not favour the opinion ; but it was generally reported and believed by the Persians. The manifesto's published after Nadir's death, only mention his cruelty and avarice in general. Ali Kouli Khan does acknowledge that he was in a conspiracy against his uncle, and that he had sent a person on purpose to perpetrate the fact ; consequently it

might have been effected, without any such motive as the apprehension of an intended massacre. It is however probable, that Nadir was not without suspicion of the design of his nephew ; and, if he intended the massacre, we may suppose it was in consequence of that suspicion.

Common sense and experience might teach us, that Nadir's conduct would produce a violent death at one time or other : no occasion could be more inviting than this : for besides all the terrors of his past cruelty, his army had nothing before their eyes, but the dreadful scene of civil wars, which had already laid waste so great a part of their country. The joint forces of Ali Kouli Khan and Tamaras Khan had not yet committed any hostilities ; yet were these leaders in a state of rebellion ; and it was obvious, that they would never submit to Nadir, but by compulsive means. And for whom was Nadir's army to fight ? For a man whom they detested as a monster of cruelty and oppression.

Thus fell this scourge of the eastern world, at the age of sixty-one, after a reign of eleven years and three months, leaving a fatal proof how much it is in one man's power, in an age of great corruption, to plunge a whole nation into an abyss of misery ; teaching also a lesson, that the sovereign who converts the mercy and justice which ought to grace a throne into oppression and cruelty, must expect that Providence will set bounds to his iniquity. By his example we likewise learn, that the most ambitious prince can never arrive at the power of doing much mischief, till a people are devoted to a vain and luxurious life, eager only in the pursuit of trivial and unworthy gratifications, corrupt to an extreme, and lost to all sense of virtue. Could Persia have thus groaned under a world of miseries, but by the iniquity of Persians ? That iniquity became the instrument of their tyrant's power ; and never will there want a tyrant in any country, when the people are arrived to such an extreme of venality and corruption.

P A R T XIV.

T H E

CHARACTER of NADIR SHAH.

C H A P. LXXI.

Reflections on the death and general character of Nadir Shah.

An account of his person, voice, strength, arms, valour, memory, diet, dress, love of women, cruelty, avarice, distrust, artfulness, clemency, liberality, generalship, politics, &c.

AS the soul has certainly a consciousness after death, we must now leave poor Nadir to revise his own actions, and to consider if an obscure and early death had not been preferable to all the pleasures and triumphs of his life; but he is in the hands of that judge, whose laws it is our honour and happiness to obey, and whose councils it is impiety to scrutinize.

The actions of this usurper made such a splendid figure even in the eyes of the European world, that for many years it was doubtful on what principles he acted; and consequently what praises were his due. Time has now taught us to strip them of all disguise; and as he who yesterday was lord of the lives of millions, is now levelled with the meanest, and it may be feared the vilest of men, we may speak of him without reserve. We may expatiate freely on the wonderful abilities by which he captivated those who were the instruments of his impiety.

Fortune and success are apt to dazzle the tender sight of mortal man; and to represent things as glorious, which in their nature are detestable. What millions has the phantom False Glory sacrificed at her altars! The actions of great conquerors, how unworthy soever, are often viewed in distant ages and remote regions, not with wonder and amazement only, but even with envy. But the prospect of eternity must convince us, that to die for the service of our fellow-creatures is really glorious; whilst those who trample

upon a prostrate world, and violate the laws of humanity, are but as dreadful storms, or pestilential blasts, to execute the wrath of an offended God. Men who trace the paths of glory by the light of fire and sword, can have no right to be remembered, except it be with horror or indignation.

To enter deep into the characters of men, even of our own country and religion, is no vulgar task ; but if we travel into remoter regions, where the manners and genius of a nation differ very much, to unravel all the foldings of a heart, distinguished from among a whole people, by a mixture of qualities unintelligible upon common principles, the understanding is puzzled. In characters like that of Nadir Kouli, we may trace out the cruelty of a Nero ; the subtlety of a Hannibal ; the valour of a Scipio ; the artfulness of a Cromwell ; with the fortune, as well as the catastrophe, of a Cæsar : nor will these make up the composition, till we add the avarice of a Vespasian ; and blend them all with an unpolished brutal temper, such as mean educations are apt to exhibit, when possessed of great power.

The minutest circumstances relating to those, who have been the objects of our astonishment, afford satisfaction to the mind. I will therefore mention such particulars, relating to Nadir Kouli, as have reached my knowledge, and which did not occur, or could not be so properly inserted, in the body of this historical account. Those, to whom his person was familiarly known, agree that his countenance was expressive rather of an ingenuous mind, than a cruel disposition. He was an Afshar, as already mentioned ; and his face was rounder, and his nose less inclined to the Roman, than the Persians generally are. His hair was black ; his eyes large and expressive ; his forehead high ; and his complexion swarthy. His body was robust ; and his stature about six feet : his shoulders were round ⁿ. His whole countenance and person were awful, particularly when he spoke.

His voice was so strong and sonorous, as to be audible to an incredible distance ; and the effect it had upon his own soldiers, as well as an enemy, when he gave his commands in the field of battle, proved one great step to his advancement to the regal power.

His corporal strength was not less instrumental to his fortune. The extreme indulgence which had been shewn him by nature in the vigour of his constitution, received an accumulated

ⁿ The Oriental people generally are round-shouldered, arising from their manner of sitting, and this occasions there being very little of majesty in their gait..

cumulated force by the habit of his life. The battle-ax is one of the most antient weapons among the Orientals, but it had been for some years much neglected in Persia; Nadir restored the use of it in a more particular manner: it was his favourite weapon, inasmuch that before he assumed the diadem, he was generally stiled the Ax-Khan. Afterwards he was often seen with a battle ax in his hand, playing with it in his tent of audience. His blows with this weapon carried with them inevitable death, of which he gave many proofs.

His memory was as remarkable, as his perfect knowledge of the genius and temper of the Persians. He could at all times easily recollect the names, persons, and characters, of all those with whom he had any connection^w. He had studied the state of the finances, and knew the particular revenues of every province: but he was so great a master of the art of ways and means, that he over-shot his mark, and by his oppressions quite destroyed his own end. As he had no turn to contemplation, his spirits were free and untired by any reflections but what immediately arose from his employments in the field. He was far advanced in life before he had learnt to read; nor did any part of his knowledge depend the least on books. His presence of mind was very remarkable^x; and his resolutions were almost as quick as his thoughts: hence he did many things extravagant and absurd.

At one part of his life he drank freely of wine and brandy, but afterwards abstained from the latter entirely, and used the former in such a proportion only, as gave the greater energy to his thoughts, and supported the activity and strength of his body. The use of wine is contrary to the Mahomedan law, but his example recommended it to his soldiers. He used to feed liberally upon a simple diet; yet he would march a whole day upon the strength of a few parched pease, which it is common for the Persians to carry in their pockets.

His dress was not remarkable; his mind seemed to be superior to external pomp or luxurious softness. His pride was in

^w What is related of him concerning his dictating to several secretaries at the same time, I apprehend arose from the notion that Julius Cæsar did this. I will not dispute the abilities of either the Roman or the Persian hero; but as the letters of the latter are contained in few words, the matter being given in general terms, the secretary performs the office, and then reads the letter. And here it may be observed, that there have been some instances of their reading differently from what they wrote, which has been the occasion of great villainies and perplexities.

^x See page 391.

in precious stones[†], with which his diadem was adorned, and he wore several in his turbant also. He was often seen with a large saphire in his hand, with which he used to amuse himself in his tent. It was said, that he always wore a coat of mail of chain-work under his cloaths: this is not improbable, considering the knowledge he had of the resentment of the people towards him. He affected to go thinly clad, and recommended this example to his soldiers.

It is reasonable to believe, that mens passions are strong in proportion to what is generally understood by strength of mind, and in some measure connected with the appetite. Where religion and the custom of a country subscribe to any favourite inclination, it would be surprizing, if a man possessed of a boundless power, did not give as boundless a scope to such inclination. Nadir was remarkable for his love of women. It was said, that some years before his death, a virgin was brought to his bed every night: these are stories however which are ridiculous. He contented himself latterly with thirty-three women[‡]; some of whom long retained a place in his favour. In his wars in Turkey, he often carried his seraglio with him.

His detestation of sodomy was extreme: but though he had frequent occasions of making examples of the practisers of that sin, yet I never heard that he interfered but once; and then he caused the malefactor's eyes to be put out, his ears, his nose, and his lips to be cut off: under these miserable circumstances, this man put himself to death. In what manner the Persians formerly regarded this sin, appears from the conduct of Shah Sessie towards a youth, who, in resisting this atrocious crime, stabbed his own master, a Khan of great distinction, for which the Shah condemned him to be torn to pieces by dogs. The same fortitude which induced this youth to deliver himself by such desperate means, supported him to the last; and he died with the utmost bravery.

As to cruelty, it at length became a kind of diversion to Nadir; this was chiefly excited by avarice, and jealousy of his own security, as well as a habit of insensibility. I never indeed heard that he put any man to death, in cold blood, with his own hands, after his advancement to the diadem: this

[†] I have already had occasion to mention the horse-furnitures, Vol. I. Chap. XXXVIII.

[‡] These had about the same number of female servants and attendants, which constituted the number mentioned in Vol. I. Chap. XXXVII.

this is more than can be said of some of their former princes, who lawfully possessed the regal dignity; for the Persian kings through many ages have been remarkable for great inhumanity. How very different are the christian and Mahomedan princes! The former, who understand their dignity, never appear in cases of executions^a; the latter delight to be present, being otherwise diffident that their orders will not be performed. Nadir saw the executions of all those who were put to death in his camp^b, nor ever appeared in the least disturbed.

When mens crimes become various and complicated, and the judge blends his private passions or resentments with the exercise of his office, in what an extremity of misery must a nation be involved, where justice is thus administered? Some instances of Nadir's cruelty were the effects of policy. Upon occasion of his memorable exploit of driving the Afghans out of Persia^c, when he entered Isfahan in triumph, one of his soldiers violated the wife of a Persian of distinction. The man complained to Nadir, that he could not live after so great an indignity; "No," says Nadir, "I think you cannot," and immediately ordered him to be strangled. He then explained to his officers the reason of his conduct in these terms, "I make no doubt but you will consider me as very cruel, for taking this man at his word; but what can I do in such times as these? A victorious army cannot always be restrained. Had I redressed this man's wrongs, I should have a hundred such complaints made to me, and my time would be taken up in chastising my soldier's, instead of employing them to conquer the enemies of our country." However, he altered his rule of conduct in this particular, of which I have related some instances.

He often suffered several to pass with impunity, though he knew they gave him no less harsh an appellation than villain; but towards those who exercised their wit in keener satyr, he was inexorable. It is a compliment amongst the Persians, to say upon the entrance of a guest, "Your place was very void^d." In the mausoleum which Nadir caused to be built

^a The late king of Portugal was indeed carried away with false notions of religion, so as to be present, incog. at the burning of the Jews.

^b The Persian judges, either civil or military, who sit on causes, are obliged to be present at the execution of their own sentences; when it does not extend to death, they mitigate or increase as they think proper.

^c In 1729.

^d This answers to, Your company was much wanted.

built at Mesched, for his reception after death, somebody wrote on the walls in very pathetic terms; "Oh! Nadir, how full of thy renown is every corner of the earth! Thy name indeed is very great; but thy place here is very void." Severe inquisition was made for the author of this writing; it was concluded to be done by some man of letters; and many Mullahs were brought to a trial: to compel them to a discovery, some were whipt to such an extremity, that they expired under the lash.

In allusion to Nadir's exaltation, a certain person observed of a fountain in Isfahan, that the higher the water was thrown up, the greater was the velocity of its fall. Nadir never wanted the base Instruments of tyranny to acquaint him of the minutest actions; and this man gratified his wit at no less an expence than his life.

None of their former kings ever inflicted punishments in a greater variety, or with circumstances more whimsical and extravagant, than Nadir. Two persons of distinction wrote to him several times, complaining of each other: at length they were both sent for to the camp. It is probable he knew the characters of these men; but without entering into the merits of either of their complaints, he pronounced them both rascals; "And since," says he, "you are so fond of troubling me with your epistles, I will spoil your sport;" accordingly he ordered the eyes of both of them to be put out. His wantonness in cruelty was not less apparent, in the instance I have mentioned of the dancer*. Another time he ordered a man's teeth to be pulled out, for no other reason than their being buck-teeth. The story of his causing Shaverdi Beg to be beaten, in order that he might remember the charge which was given him†, had humour and judgment mixed with barbarity.

He treated common men and delinquents of the highest rank without much distinction of persons. It was no unusual sight in the chancery, to see those who had been the day before bastinadoed almost to death, whose eyes had been put out, or their nose cut off, yet brought before him to be further questioned. Upon these occasions they have often sunk down thro' pain or want of rest: and these miserable objects have been also obliged to travel with the camp. When Nadir sent for any person, if he did not instantly come, the messengers drove him with blows; and those who have made any

* Vol. I. Chap. XXXVIII.

† Vol. I. Chap. XXXII.

any short delay, to finish their prayers^a, or to perform any other weighty business, have been often bastinadoed.

The avarice of this tyrant was no less remarkable than his cruelty. It was his custom, according to the practice of former kings, to send for the governors of the provinces, however remote from his camp, to appear before him every new-year's-day. His intention in this very frequently was to mulct them, or put them to death. His ordinary method was to interrogate them concerning the state and condition of the province, and of their own behaviour in particular. From thence he proceeded to trifling and superfluous questions, concluding that he supposed they had defrauded him of large sums. "How much," says he, "of my money have you eaten^b; and in whose hands is it lodged?" These questions were ordinarily followed by the bastinado, to induce them to condemn themselves, or to accuse other people of being depositaries of considerable sums. It frequently happened that these persons, either to avoid the pain of corporal punishments, or with the hopes of being restored to their governments, have given in a fictitious list of persons as their debtors, with the sums due from each, and also of effects deposited in their hands. They even took this occasion to gratify their private resentments, by mentioning those as their debtors, who had given them any offence. The consequence of these declarations was the issuing a decree, ordering the collection of such sums and effects by the severest executions of military law, without any liberty of appeal previous to the payment. If these pretended debtors, after a severe beating were found incapable of payment, orders were often given to collect such sums from the province. The governors were frequently guilty of enormous extortions and cruelties, without giving a true account of what they had thus unjustly collected; yet the complaints of the people seldom obtained them any relief; for the elders or principal persons of the provinces, who were generally called on to appear as witnesses against their governors, were often compelled to make good their allegations, by paying the deficiency of the Shah's demands, after the sequestration of the governor's effects. He carried the matter so far that upon a certain occasion, when he found himself distressed how to answer

^a The Mahomedans are much stricter in this respect than the christians.

^b The ordinary term in Persia for embezzlement.

answer one who had vindicated his conduct, he said to him, "You rascal, did not you drink cold water¹?"

It does not appear, from any circumstance of the first stage of this man's life, that his temper was avaricious. It is natural to believe, that he thought nothing could secure his usurpation better than the poverty of the people, as the most effectual means of preventing their rebellions, or of rendering them abortive. This is the best argument that can be brought in extenuation of that crime, which at length became the great moving principle to drown Persia in blood. Poverty without doubt was a great discouragement, and often proved a bar to the success of their attempts against him. But what can we say of his unjust and cruel treatment of private persons, merely for the sake of what they possessed; where there was not the least reason to suspect their loyalty?

In 1740, several districts in Ghilan were ordered to equip soldiers for the service of the crown, and to be answerable in the penalty of one thousand crowns^k for each deserter. This proved a source of oppression; for these recruits were generally ill paid, and ill treated in the army, that they might be tempted to desert; and the payment of the penalty was always rigorously exacted of the securities.

When he found himself bound in honour to disapprove of the behaviour of his governors, of whose unjust conduct all possible evidence had been given, his decrees for restitution to the complainants were generally expressed in such ambiguous terms, as rendered the application for justice vexatious, and the issue of them oftentimes unsuccessful. Sensible of his predominant vice, his greatest officers greedily amassed riches, as the surest means of their preservation; though it frequently happened, those very riches were the cause of their destruction. Having been often challenged to answer for their corruption, several of the most considerable amongst them, at length resolved to keep a regular account of all presents they received, that in case of need they might produce it: but still it was a misfortune to possess any money; for Nadir seldom thought he had got their all. Shew and equipage is a favourite passion among the Persians, yet I observed the governors who came to answer for their conduct, and other great officers, chose to walk on
foot

¹ This is an instance of such flagrant tyranny, as hardly comes within the limits of belief, yet I have been assured that it is really true.

^k 250*l*.

foot in the camp, rather than to appear in any circumstances of affluence. As to the officers of inferior rank, they imagined their security consisted in refusing presents.

Avarice, the peculiar weakness of old age, increased on Nadir with his years : yet his rapaciousness might not be entirely an effect of this passion. If we consider the vast expence of his army ; the impossibility of raising taxes upon his people, in the latter part of his reign ; and that his safety depended on the military power with which he was surrounded ; his Indian treasure, though reputed very large, was not sufficient to check his apprehensions of want. At length he gave a standing order to his ministers, not to present any petitions to him that were repugnant to the interest of the crown^m ; by which was plainly meant, that he would do no other act of justice in money affairs, than the bare payment of his army.

The seizure he made on his own soldiers, on the banks of the Indus, is as distinguished a proof of his avarice, as of his resolution. From that time he laid claim to all diamonds and jewels of value, that were exposed to sale in his dominions ; alledging, that he had been defrauded of them, on the occasion of his Indian conquest ; or that they were stolen out of his jewel-house. He has more than once punished offenders of this sort with bastonading, and even with death ; and, in these cases, beside the loss of the precious stones, he inflicted a mulct of equal value.

Jealousy and distrust, in all their horrid forms, will ever wait in the chambers of tyrants, and torment them “ before their time.” Nadir’s great officers were so sensible of this, that they were afraid to converse even with strangers, except when they were upon duty in their tribunals. Neither did they dare to visit each other in their tents, except in the day-time ; and that only in the presence of their servants, or other witnesses, lest a suspicion should be conceived of their

^m This is a common notion in arbitrary countries, where the prince and his subjects are often considered in so different a light, that many acts of justice are omitted, out of a religious regard to the interest of the crown, as they are pleased to call it. Perhaps it is from the same notion, that even in so polite and free a country as Great Britain, the debts of a deceased prince are paid very late, and sometimes not at all. This conduct seems to be void of economy, if not of justice. If it is understood as a condition, that when a prince dies, the tradesman must lose his money, there ought at least to be some method in payments whilst he lives ; and, in the mean while, the prince must pay dear for all that he consumes that is bought on trust.

their caballing against him ^a. He made no scruple of telling the people that he was apprized of their disaffection, but that he neither regarded it nor them. An arrow was shot once into his quarters with a libel, accusing him of tyranny and irreligion; demanding of him if he was a devil or god: a tyrant, a king, or a prophet? That if he was a god, they would supplicate his mercy to avert their punishment; if a king, they intreated him to shew clemency; if a prophet, to produce his mission? To this paper Nadir made a very dispassionate answer: "I am neither god nor devil, tyrant nor prophet; but I am one sent from God, to punish an iniquitous generation of men." This answer was written, and copies of it annexed to the libel, and placed in the most conspicuous part of the camp: a promise of pardon was also made to the author, if he would discover himself; and a considerable reward to any person who should discover him.

Much may be alledged for the suspicious turn which he took; for the Persians are as gentle, soft, and persuasive in their manners, as they are full of cunning and deceit. They are polite, and affect condescension to strangers or guests; but where they have any power or authority, their deportment is selfish, haughty, and insolent: to this we may add a strong propensity ^o to rebellion. From his earliest life Nadir had an experimental knowledge of them, in all their several ranks and conditions; and seemed now to have adopted as an invariable maxim, that they could be ruled only with a rod of iron. Thus several causes concurred to cherish a cruel, jealous disposition. As he mounted the throne by means of the corruption and immorality of the people, policy still required him to sow the seeds of a jealous enmity among the principal persons under his command.

How dreadful the situation of a tyrannical king, when the very union of his subjects is the greatest object of his terror; and their mutual hatred and disgust essential to his support! Religion was still the cloak to foment animosities. The Persians professed a veneration for Ali, and their expounders of the khoran; whilst the Tartars, and other nations, of which his army was chiefly composed, were of the sect of the Sunnis. Nadir ranked himself strictly with neither ^p, but was equally attentive

^a See Vol. I. Chap. XXIX.

^o Though this may not be the proper characteristic of the people, yet it seems to be an effect of their present immorality, as well as resentment of tyranny.

^p We have already explained his political inclination to the sect of the Sunnis.

attentive to gratify both, whenever the occasion required. His greatest support arose from the multitude of his spies and emissaries, detached into every part of the empire. His public officers and private agents, growing suspicious of each other, were equally impatient of giving the first information, of any secret design, or even disaffection, in prejudice to their master. Thus the nearest relations and most intimate friends, often entertained a jealousy of each other. Those who had any honesty in their nature, might be sometimes tempted for their oaths sake, to prevent the effusion of blood, to give intelligence; the envious and revengeful to gratify their private passions; his mercenaries for their interest: and almost in general were they desirous of sharing the spoils of ruined provinces; thus tearing out the entrails of their common parent, and rendering themselves instrumental to their own destruction. Every social virtue was neglected; common faith and common honesty were little more among them, than bare names. Under these circumstances, how could they be delivered from the power of one tyrant, without falling into the hands of another?

Whilst Nadir's glory was ripening, it was his policy to make great professions of esteem to those whose services he stood in need of; but afterwards he acted on the wretched maxim, that a king has no friend or relation. Gratitude consequently could not appear as a princely virtue, nor have any seat in his breast; on the contrary, he seemed diffident, that those who were capable of a zealous concern for his interest, from a principle of affection, might, on the same principle, be partial to others also, if his conduct should render him ungrateful to them. This seemed to be the general rule he observed, with some few exceptions; since we find that the vigilance and moderation of Mustapha Khan and Cosmin Khan, the only two persons whose conduct I ever heard commended, supported them; and we must amidst all his crimes do Nadir the justice to remember, that he cherished these men to the last. This seems to prove how irresistible the charms of virtue are; and that the subjects of Persia were in general almost as little deserving mercy, as their king was disposed to shew it. But the amiable qualities of the mind being so rare, they could be no great objects of his dread: the perfections most level to his observation, and which struck most forcibly on his mind, were corporal strength and valour. Though he often stood in need of these, the person who acquired any distinguished reputation

for them, became the object of his envy, if not of his fear. Of this they told me a remarkable story :

A certain Mim Bafhi ¹ had often distinguished himself in the field of battle: his skill in the use of the sabre was not less extraordinary than his corporal strength, and he was at length made a Khan. The Persians, in their hyperbolical manner of speaking, say, that this man could cut a mule with a pack-saddle on her back through at one stroke. It is hardly credible how much the Persians esteem bodily strength and military abilities: Nadir cast a jealous eye on this person; and as if he meant to try his virtue, he gave him the charge of a beautiful girl, to be carried to his brother Ibrahim Khan. On the way he debauched her; and Ibrahim discovering the indignity, sent her back to the king his brother. It is easy to imagine, that Nadir would resent the affront also; in short, he vowed to shed the blood of the offender. Riza Kouli Myrza, then in high favour with his father, had a very particular regard for this officer; he attended the prisoner before the Shah's ² pavilion, pleaded his cause, and obtained his pardon. Nadir, for the sake of his vow, ordered a bit of the offender's ear to be cut off. This however was but a temporary reprieve: soon after he was sent to burn a Turkish village; but before it was possible for him to arrive there, he was recalled, and questioned why he had not performed his orders; and after several imperious insults, Nadir commanded that he should be strangled. Before the bow-string was thrown about his neck, he made a sign, as if he had something of importance to communicate; and, as is usual in such cases, a suspension was permitted. The Khan availed himself of this interval, to plunge out of the hands of the executioners; and seizing the sabre of one near him, rushed forward towards the Shah, who rose from his seat, and retired before his enemy. The attendants near the royal pavilion interposed, and killed the delinquent, but not before he had slain three of them. This circumstance was one great cause, why the people in general, as well as the prisoners, who are brought before the Shah, were kept at a greater distance than common.

The natural pride of the human heart is flattered, when our superiors bring themselves down to our level. The general, who is not over-tender of his person, becomes the minion of the common soldiers; but if to courage he adds
liberality,

¹ Commander of a thousand horse.

² The circumstances seem to indicate, that this event was a little before he was declared king.

liberality, he subdues their hearts. Nadir was a master of every art of this sort, and in his first appearances in life, gained the universal affection of the army. He was no sooner vested with a command, than he became assiduous to ingratiate himself with the soldiers, not only by procuring them their pay in due time, but also good cloathing at an easy price, with the addition of occasional gifts. He was not ignorant of the use of clemency, in circumstances of great importance. A party of Ousbegs, who had done him signal service in battle, afterwards deserted from him: he sent a body of troops, and brought them to his camp as prisoners: they expected death; but he bid them continue to serve him faithfully, as they had already done, and made every private man the present of fifty crowns, and gave five hundred to each officer. The revolt of soldiers, on whom he most depended for the security of his person, as well as the advancement of his glory, might have been attended with very dangerous consequences. But he no sooner carried his point, than he adopted new principles. Common prudence indeed obliged him to be watchful of the œconomy of his army; yet the meanness of his education could not be corrected by his advancement to the diadem; and whilst jealousy and distrust became his constant companions, cruelty and avarice gained the ascendent over him, in every action of the latter part of his life; this appeared in many circumstances, not only towards his army, but to the people in general.

No part of Nadir's character was more distinguished, than that of a general; he lived in the field in the several characters of a peasant, a captive, a servant, a robber, a soldier, a general, and a king. Bred up in all the arts and subtleties of the Tartars, he acquired a great proficiency in the practical knowledge of robbery. Hence it is easy to imagine, that a person of his extraordinary natural talents and personal strength, should become forward, bold, and enterprising. Enured to a military life, he acquired a strong inclination for that variety which a continued change of place is apt to create. The intrepidity which he possessed in so eminent a degree, is a dazzling quality among men professing arms; but success established his character as an able and fortunate general. His person and voice were instrumental to his promotion, but his valour was not less so. They seem to have acted reciprocally on each other; and the consciousness of his superiority over most other men, rendered him dauntless to a degree of amazement; yet were his motions generally directed with great prudence: the same presence of mind which

assisted him on all emergencies, taught him also how to consult his own safety; for it cannot be imputed entirely to fortune, that he was never wounded. In the height of his grandeur, he would upon any emergency, out-march his baggage, and suffer any hardship incident to a common soldier.

His quickness of observation where his forces were weakest, and his presence of mind in succouring them, ever gave him a wonderful superiority over his enemies. His resolution seemed to inspire his people with a determined purpose to conquer or die; nor did his officers ever behave ill with impunity. In action, he generally tired many horses, being never long missing where his presence was needful. Upon these occasions he was wont to address his men in such familiar terms, as seemed to demonstrate an opinion, that a soldier will not perform his duty well, when he has no regard for his general. He found it indispensibly necessary to keep his army in motion, to prevent those conspiracies, for which a great part of his soldiers were always ripe; by this means also, the people in the remote parts of the empire were kept in awe, and he was ready to oppose the invasion of his neighbours, or to make conquests.

As he enjoyed great health, and was enured to exercise, his activity was hardly to be exceeded. His mind was strongly tinged with the notion of predestination, and he became so much the more dauntless by it; yet we do not find that he fell into the absurd practice of deviating from the dictates of common sense, with which this erroneous principle sometimes affects its votaries. He seldom placed a confidence that was unnecessary, or exposed himself to a danger that was avoidable. In the conduct of his wars, he ever preferred stratagems to force. His marches were always amazingly rapid, and his progress so irregular, and contrary to the ordinary rules of war, that he confounded his enemies. Thus he often defeated their best laid schemes, and attacked them where they were least able to defend themselves. Yet in matters of the greatest moment, his resolutions were generally so quick and surpassing ordinary apprehensions, that it seemed doubtful whether they were the effects of a solid judgment, or a blind temerity. Under the difficulties in which he was often involved, irresolution seemed to be what he dreaded most; nor did he dare to ask advice, lest he should weaken the superiority by which he governed. The neighbouring Mahomedan states, after some years knowledge of him, conceived such an opinion of his

his

his penetration, and such a dread from his fortune, as to ascribe to him a kind of preternatural power. The same notions, among his own people, often led them to betray themselves, and desert their own cause.

As to religion, it was uncertain what his notions were: before a battle, it was his constant custom to prostrate himself for the space of a minute, and make an ejaculatory prayer; this being the chief, if not the sole act of religion, of which he gave any demonstration, as the Persians confidently relate of him.

Never was a man more indefatigable with regard to personal application and attendance to every duty of a commander: and it was his practice in the height of summer, and sometimes at other seasons, to come to his tent of audience early in the morning, often making it a second visit before noon, and spending many hours of the evening in the same manner. He was punctual in the payment of his army, and took a surprizing care that his camp should be supplied with the necessaries of life; but at the same time he received great advantages by being the sole vender of cloth, and some other commodities to his soldiers, constantly employing a person under the denomination of the Shah's merchant.

Whether it arose from the superiority of his genius that he neglected forms, or from the narrowness of his education that he could not fill up the character, he often forgot the dignity of a king. Upon the occasion of his giving a government to a certain person, he spoke to this effect: "Remember that you are not to have any communication with the Mullah^c; but I know that you will go to him by night^d, and you will talk of me; he will confess there is not such a king in the world as I am, but at the same time he will tell you I am a rascal^e, and have no mercy: take heed how you listen to his suggestions." Nor was he less ingenuous upon many occasions. Having asked if there were any prince on the earth greater than himself and the grand signior; and being answered, that there were not any, he replied, "You are mistaken; the Basha of Bagdat is greater than either of us; for both of us have been endeavouring to reduce him to our subjection, but his fortune and conduct have been superior to our attempts^w."

P p 3

Many

^c A certain priest whom Nadir suspected of disaffection.

^d He also mentioned the room where they would sit, with other circumstances.

^e Kurumsack.

^w As mentioned in Page 426.

Many circumstances of the politics of this extraordinary man were unfathomable, particularly in his punishing offenders; petty crimes he often chastised with heavy punishments, whilst offences of the blackest dye sometimes passed with impunity, or a slight resentment. Even those who had been in open rebellion against him, he has more than once reinstated in their office, or preferred them to greater dignities, of which Taghi Khan is a remarkable instance. Thus he seemed inclined to trust those who had been his avowed enemies, rather than such as he had not yet proved.

In the latter part of his reign he had no counsellor; and his ministers in most repute were so far from being admitted to any kind of familiarity, that they dared not enter his tent. When they had business with him, they stood in the open air within the semicircle of his attendants, being rarely allowed to sit down. It must be observed, that the rank to which he promoted them was a reward for their valour, and their knowledge of the arts of extortion, not for their wisdom or probity; from whence it naturally followed, that men of the meanest extraction often possessed the highest offices.

The state of mankind is so corrupt, that actions even of the brightest hue frequently endanger the security of the actor, by the malice, envy, avarice, or ambition of other men. This has been in no country more verified in these latter ages, than in Persia. To those uncommon talents which Nadir possessed, had he joined humanity and probity of mind, it would be reasonable to think he might have been the instrument to prevent the ruin of that unhappy country. But could a man of probity rule over a people, whose corruption rendered them mature for destruction? Had the people been less vicious, the vices of the usurper could not have been so destructive.

In extenuation of Nadir's crimes, great as they will ever be acknowledged, there was a moral certainty of his becoming a sacrifice much sooner, had he been possessed of less power. It was with him, as with many great wicked men before him; being advanced in the perilous paths of ambition, he found it dangerous to stop, and impossible to retreat with safety. Self-preservation then called on him to march on, and explore the giddy heights from whence he fell, and involved his country in such prodigious ruin. We are apt to ascribe even the good actions of wicked men to sinister purposes. There is no character without some shades and mixtures of virtue. In the beginning of his reign, Nadir dispensed justice with an equal hand, and affected the name
of

of a just king. Great encouragement was given to appeal to him upon every occasion of the extortion or illegal proceedings of his governors; nor was redress to be obtained but from his decrees: such was the abominable corruption of the people. Thus at a time when men of sentiments might have some flattering expectations of happy consequences from the victories of their sovereign, the arts of venality prevailed so much, that even the royal decrees could not be carried into execution, without bribes and presents.

It is an incontestible fact, that Persia was indebted to Nadir Kouli for her deliverance from the yoke of the Afghans: to him she owed the restoration of her legal sovereign; and by his valour and conduct the Persian monarchy recovered, in a little more than eight years, the several dominions which had been torn from her during the weak and effeminate reign of Shah Hussein, and the invasion of the Afghans; but that he acted on just principles, or possessed such abilities as were necessary to secure all these advantages, the fondest panegyrist never will pretend. On the contrary, it seems plain from the issue, that he was influenced by motives which eclipse his best actions, and that he aspired at the sovereignty from his first defeat of the Afghans. Many causes co-incided to flatter the highest expectation that could be formed in his breast; of these the great corruption of the people must have been the chief; whilst the weakness of Shah Tæhmas opened such a prospect to him of mounting to the supreme power, as could not be resisted by a man, in whose mind all moral considerations gave way to his ambition.

P A R T XV.

T H E

Short and unfortunate R E I G N of
A D I L S H A H.

C H A P. LXXII.

Ali Kouli Khan elected king of Persia at Mesched. He sends his brother Ibrahim Myrza to Isfahan; and commits several cruelties. He solicits the friendship of Russia. The revolt of Amur Aslan Khan; also of Ibrahim Myrza. The death of Zorab Khan. The defeat of Adil Shah, and his brother Ibrahim Myrza, &c.

1747. **E**UROPE seems to be very imperfectly acquainted with the consequences of the death of the usurper Nadir; even the Russians and the Turks, who are best situated to receive information, have not, I believe, the most perfect accounts; and are moreover interested, either to conceal or misrepresent those which reach them. The spilling of Nadir's blood has been a fresh source of calamities to the Persians. I have mentioned some few particulars, so far as they relate to our unfortunate trade over the Caspian Sea ^b. All that I have to add, is a short account of some events which followed the catastrophe of the usurper.

It has been already observed, that Mustapha Khan was on an embassy to Turkey, when Nadir's death happened. Providence seemed to interpose for his security, who was one of the very few honest men in Persia. As he was prevented from being a spectator, it is probable he escaped being a sharer also, in the unhappy fate of his master. He was arrived in the Turkish dominions when the news reached him; and he thought it necessary for his security to proceed with all

^b See Vol. I. Page 422.

all his retinue to Constantinople. In the mean while, the Turkish ambassador, who was coming to confirm the peace lately concluded, had the good fortune to reach Bagdat with all the valuable presents which he was carrying to the Persian court. As to Knez Galitzen, the news of Nadir's violent death no sooner arrived at Reshd, then he retired to Astrachan by sea, as well to inform his court of this extraordinary event, and provide for the safety of his own person, as to receive fresh instructions.

Ali Kouli Khan now made no secret, that he had been the chief instigator of the conspiracy against his uncle, and as such was considered as best entitled to the diadem. As he had been governor of Mesched, no officer could boast of superior honours; and as the nephew of the late tyrant, he had been respected: but though he was so nearly related to Nadir, he had very little resemblance in his disposition; his temper was free, open and generous, nor was he without the reputation of being a good soldier.

The news of his uncle's death was no sooner brought to him *, than he came to Mesched, where he put on the royal diadem, and took the name of Adil Shah †, with the seeming applause of the inhabitants, and began his reign in a very popular manner. In consideration of the great poverty of the people; he remitted the taxes over the whole empire, and performed other acts of clemency. But at the same time, according to the execrable policy of Mahomedan princes, he imbrued his hands in the blood of his nearest relations. Nefr Ali Myrza first fell a sacrifice to his jealousy, nor did he spare the blind Riza Kouli. Different accounts were given of his conduct towards Shahrokh, the son of this blind prince, and grand-son ‡ of Nadir. Whether the real Shahrokh survived this event, or not; one under this name, who pretended to be the identical person, soon after assumed the diadem, as we shall relate. Tho' Ali had the reputation of being humane; yet his cruelty did not stop at the destruction

* It is a circumstance not unworthy of remark, that the messenger who was sent with Nadir's head to Ali Kouli Khan, lost it by the way; and to save his credit, produced that of another man.

† The just king.

‡ According to the accounts we had at that time from Persia, it was doubtful whether the real Shahrokh was put to death, or not; some report that he was previously sent away into safe custody; others, that he was present, but spared at the instigation of the priest, as the only remaining blood, on the mother's side, of the Sessie family.

struction of the sons of Nadir, for he also caused several of his uncle's women, who were with child, to be ripped up.

Kælat, with all the treasure in it being surrendered up to him, to all appearance the most prudent step which this new king could take, was to march immediately to Isfahan, and carry with him a great part of his riches. Nadir's army being for the most part dispersed, he could have left a sufficient number of troops on the eastern frontiers, and then raising a new army, establish himself on the basis of a military government, so essential to the support of his sovereignty. But he was blind to the danger to which he was exposed, and triumphing in a fond security from his immense riches, abandoned himself to his favourite gratifications of women and wine, and sent his brother Ibrahim Khan, whom we shall now call Ibrahim Myrza ^a, to Isfahan, in order to raise recruits.

His next business was to excuse himself for the share he had in the murder of his uncle; and, at the same time, to make his intentions known to the people, with regard to their future relief from that insupportable tyranny, which had been exercised over them; so that this event might afford them all the joy and consolation which was natural to expect from such a deliverance.

The following decree, which he sent to Reshd in the province of Ghilan, gives us an idea of the state of affairs a few weeks after Nadir's death.

“ Wherein stands
 “ The kingdom of G O D,
 “ SHAH and sovereign of the empire,
 “ A servant of A L I,
 “ A mandate which the whole world obeys ^b.

“ The noble and honourable Cheich El Islam ^c; the
 “ Kazzi ^d; the elders and all subjects; the poor and oppressed inhabitants of Reshd, Lahijan, Rancoute, Keskar,
 “ Fumin, Shefta, Kugdum ^e, and the places thereunto belonging; to whom the Almighty has granted his unutter-
 “ able

^a As the brother of a king, we now call him Myrza, or prince.

^b This was the inscription on the royal signet, which they place at the head of the decree.

^c Chief of religion. Islam we have observed signifies safety; by which is meant the Mahommedan religion.

^d Judges.

^e These are districts in and about Ghilan.

“ able mercies; who are assured of, and exalted by our in-
 “ comparable sovereign favour; shall Know, in what man-
 “ ner the wickedness of the barbarous monarch ^f hath pre-
 “ vailed. All nations and languages, the exalted and the
 “ humble, the good and the bad subjects of the empire of
 “ Iran ^g, are too well acquainted with his proceedings.
 “ Their incessant cries and lamentations have reached even
 “ unto the heavens. By putting out the eyes of the inhabi-
 “ tants, depriving them of their lives; and selling the sons
 “ and daughters of musfulmen; even the seven celestial cir-
 “ cles ^h were moved to compassion. In a word, the extor-
 “ tion of elphs ⁱ and crores ^k has been the cause of multi-
 “ tudes of people losing their sight ^l; whilst the tyrannical
 “ monarch barbarously erected lofty towers of human heads
 “ through the provinces, exceeding all the cruelties of past
 “ ages. At length our sovereign majesty commanded the
 “ most eminent and high instructed, Mahommed Kouli
 “ Khan, our Kurchi Bafhi ^m, that he should prevail on the
 “ Afshar guards, to seize and remove the tyrant; thus per-
 “ forming a service highly beneficial to the public welfare,
 “ restoring rest and tranquillity to the nation. Mahommed
 “ Kouli Khan did not refuse to obey. All persons of dis-
 “ tinction, and the whole army near our victorious and
 “ splendid stirrup, were anxious to extirpate the deep-root-
 “ ed violences and oppressions of this tyrannical king. We
 “ therefore marched at the head of our forces from Ferag
 “ and Herat, and came with haste for that purpose; but on
 “ our arrival on the borders of Terbedshan, news came that
 “ the Afshar guards had already seized the tyrant. In the
 “ mean while there happened a commotion among the Tar-
 “ tars ⁿ, for the suppression of which there was no other re-
 “ medy than to give the tyrant the reward of his actions.

“ The

^f Nadir.

^g Persia.

^h The planets.

ⁱ Five hundred thousand hazardenaer, or 125,000 l.

^k Ten elphs, or five millions of crowns, or 1,250,000 l. are equal to a crore in India.

^l He here quotes a text out of the khoran, which is very obscure, and contradictory. I have heard that the number of persons blinded, was not less than thirty thousand; but this seems to be exaggerated.

^m See Page, 170.

ⁿ Ali disguises the real fact, but gives some light in regard to the contest between the Tartars and Persians. He seems to assume the merit of removing his uncle, but yet to impute the execution to the Afshars, who were Nadir's body-guard.

“ The fort of Kælat, which the late king had spent many years in rendering impregnable, thanks to the Most High, was in one day brought under our subjection by Segrab Beg, whom we sent thither for that purpose.

“ As soon as these happy tidings reached our ears, we marched to the holy city of Mesched, where all the ministers, commanding officers, and persons of distinction present, did with one common voice intreat our majesty to take upon us the government of the empire, to rebuild the ruined houses, and repair the desolations of Persia. They presented as their intercessor the holy saint, who is buried in that city °, and would not desist from their importunity.

“ When we considered the sad state of the Persians for several years past, who had been obliged not only to deliver up all their substance, but themselves, and their families, to be slaughtered ^p, we thought it necessary to shew our sovereign favour to the oppressed; to appease the wrath of heaven; to satisfy the creatures of God, and to gain the love of the people. We have therefore been graciously pleased to order, and do hereby command, that the new contributions in money ^q, imposed on subjects and strangers, shall from henceforward cease and be annulled. We likewise discharge the collectors ^r, who are in your province, and you are to send them to our court. But the money and effects belonging to the crown, which are already collected, shall be accounted for ^s. All the other revenues for this year, as also all taxes for the following two years, we do most graciously forgive, that the subjects of Islam, and all other religious, as likewise the Indians and others, who for some years have been subject to every kind of torture and oppression, may enjoy an uninterrupted safety and tranquillity, and solicit the Most High for our welfare.

“ What

° The sepulchre of Imam Riza often mentioned.

^p Here he quotes another text out of the khoran. “ You are all shepherds, and every one craves from you;” by which I suppose is meant, that in consequence of an absurd authority, every subject was pillaged.

^q Provisions, &c. were sometimes demanded.

^r Mohafils.

^s The term is, entered in the cash-book.

“ What concerns the support of post-horses^c, those to whom
 “ this office belongs shall take proper care; and for the fu-
 “ ture double the number of horses shall be kept at each
 “ stage, as was lately ordered; and the money for maintain-
 “ ing of them shall be taken out of the treasury of the pro-
 “ vince. In case of any deficiency, a representation being
 “ made to us, it shall be supplied from other treasuries.

“ For settling the accounts of this year, two or three
 “ writers and calentars shall be sent to our high court. And
 “ concerning the estates, which in the late reign were taken
 “ from numbers of the people, we shall order an inspection
 “ to be made, and a circumstantial account thereof to be
 “ sent to us. And that every one may be satisfied in this
 “ particular, we shall without delay appoint a proper person
 “ for that purpose. Given in the month of Deschemadiel-
 “ sam, 1160.”

Ali having made some dispositions for settling his govern-
 ment, he came with a body of forces to spend the remainder
 of the year at the palace of Ashreff^w, near the midst of the
 south-coast of the Caspian Sea. In that situation he hoped to
 suppress any insurrection that might arise in the northern pro-
 vinces, presuming that his brother Ibrahim Myrza would
 protect the south, whilst in case of necessity he might again
 direct his march eastward. In the mean while Amur Aslan
 Khan acknowledged the sovereignty of this new king, and
 commanded in the west. This person was an officer of
 great experience, and had been a favourite of Nadir; he was
 now in Shirvan at the head of thirty thousand men.

In order to confirm the peace which Nadir had made with
 the Turks, Adil Shah sent an envoy-extraordinary to the
 Port, to signify his exaltation to the throne of Persia, and his
 inclination to live in harmony with the grand signior: this
 minister accordingly arrived there in April 1748. It is easy
 to conceive how ill the Turks would relish the advancement
 of a nephew of Nadir. That Providence had thus removed
 him, who had been so great an object of their terror, afford-
 ed great satisfaction; but their ambition was to see that army
 crushed, which had been so often the instrument of shedding
 such streams of their blood, and making their sovereign trem-
 ble in his very capital. The result of this embassy was, that
 the

^c The reader will observe in several passages of these volumes,
 that the bad conduct of couriers was one of the grievous oppres-
 sions under which Persia groaned.

ⁿ About the beginning of July 1747.

^w See Vol. I. Chap. XLIII.

the two courts should mutually send ambassadors with the usual pomp and formalities : in the mean while, we are left to imagine that the Turkish partizans would not be idle in fomenting that civil discord in Persia, which they had found so advantageous ; since without the expence of blood and treasure, without danger or inconvenience, they could thus look on and see their natural enemy tearing out her own bowels.

Adil Shah was not less assiduous to cultivate the most perfect amity with the Russians. The retreat of the ambassador Knez Galitzen from Ghilan, had given the Persian ministers some alarms. Koulifa, who had been formerly ambassador in Russia, wrote to the Russian ambassador in September : the following extract contains the most material part of the letter :

“ May your eminence’s blessed health, by the grace of
 “ the Almighty, endure to the end of the world. I have
 “ had the honour to write to you several friendly letters,
 “ sent through the hands of the most noble and most honour-
 “ able of the religion of Messiah, the resident of the high
 “ imperial court of Russia ; but I have not received any an-
 “ swer. I long with impatience for your arrival ; God
 “ grant it may be soon, that we may once more happily see
 “ each other.

“ I now acquaint you, as I have already done, that his
 “ majesty, equal in dignity to Alexander, and in servants to
 “ Darius, protector of the whole world, Adil Shah, whose
 “ reign may the Most High preserve for ever, and my soul
 “ serve him as a sacrifice, has been graciously pleased to
 “ mount the throne of Iran. Thus by the help of God, the
 “ government of the whole empire is in the high power of
 “ his majesty, the most gracious and just monarch. The
 “ fort Kælat, with all the treasures and riches therein con-
 “ tained, is in his majesty’s possession ; and the enemies of
 “ his everlasting court, thus established by the Almighty,
 “ are utterly extirpated.

“ It will appear to you by the copy of the mandate
 “ inclosed, that the most gracious monarch did imagine you
 “ yet resided at Reshd, therefore he commanded me to wait
 “ on your eminency ; and ordered the most noble Achmed
 “ Khan to convoy you to Mazanderan, where the most
 “ worthy Mahommed Ali Beg, Khajar, of noble descent,
 “ will meet and conduct you with all due honour to the
 “ Shah’s high court. To conclude, I wish the days of bliss
 “ may last for ever.”

This

This letter was accompanied with long instructions from the Shah to Koulifa, to shew all possible honour to the em^d bassador. Achmed Khan had also commands to the same purpose, all demonstrative of his desire of supporting the best correspondence with his neighbours the Russians. Within very few weeks after Nadir's death, and before he came to the palace of Ashreff, the Shah himself sent a letter to the ambassador Galitzen. Like others, it was marked with his seal at the head, viz.

“ Wherein stands
 “ The kingdom of G O D,
 “ Sovereign of the empire,
 “ A servant of A L I.

“ The most eminent, high appointed, noble and high
 “ intrusted ambassador, from the most exalted imperial
 “ court of Russia, Knez Galitzen, shall be assured of our
 “ sovereign favour, and Know, that the vile disposition and
 “ corrupted nature of the late monarch surpassed all bounds.
 “ How cruel his proceedings have been, you will be circum-
 “ stantially informed in due time.

“ At present you are acquainted that our sovereign majesty, by the grace and assistance of God, has been highly
 “ pleased to take the throne of the Persian empire ; at which
 “ time it has been represented to us, that your eminence has
 “ been sent here as an ambassador, from the most puissant
 “ and imperial court of Russia ; and that the most eminent
 “ Serdar *, Amur Aslan Khan, Nedscheff Beg, and other
 “ commanders did receive your eminence on the borders of
 “ Persia, but made such bad preparations for your journey
 “ through Shirvan, as created a disgust, for which they shall
 “ be accountable.

“ And whereas it has been represented to our majesty,
 “ that your eminence is endowed with good understanding,
 “ a quick insight, and a decent behaviour in all things † ; and
 “ sent expressly with so great a power to our high court, to
 “ establish amity ; therefore we hope you will not be offend-
 “ ed on account of these accidents. And as we are inclined
 “ to support the friendship and harmony between our sove-
 “ reign majesty and her imperial majesty of Russia ; and like-
 “ wise to shew you all honour, we desire you will proceed
 “ with

* General.

† This is the common flattering stile of the Persians.

“ with the utmost confidence to our high court. Given in
 “ the month of Redshebel 1160.”

This new king was too much inclined to peace, to neglect the cultivation of good understanding with his neighbours; and to be wanting in nothing that could be agreeable to Russia, he prepared an embassy with a view to make a defensive and offensive alliance with that court, and also a treaty of commerce, which might be beneficial to the subjects of both empires. Emissaries from the Persian court were actually sent to Astrachan^a. The Russians proceed with great caution in their oriental treaties, and generally divert the Persians in the last mentioned city for several months, before they conduct them to court. Under the precarious circumstances of the Persian king, doubtless many reasons occurred for acting with reserve.

1748. The beginning of this year opened a new scene, not less fatal or bloody than any of the preceding. Amur Aslan Khan, who commanded in the western provinces, and resided at Tavis, already gave indications of his design to revolt. The Shah being arrived at Ashreff, sent several messages to him, desiring him to come to court: he feigned various excuses, and at length threw off the mask by killing the couriers whom the king had appointed to conduct him. This event was soon followed by an act of hostility, not only in violation of his duty as a subject, but also of the laws of justice and hospitality. To what extremities will not a false ambition hurry its votaries! This Khan, who was the exact copy of his tutor and late master Nadir Shah, began to be sensible of the impossibility of supporting an army without money; nor could he procure any considerable supplies from Aderbeitzan, Shirvan, or any of the neighbouring provinces where his jurisdiction reached: he therefore resolved to obtain by robbery, what he could not procure by any appearance of equity. He knew that the English factors in Reshd were possessed of a sum of money, which no doubt was represented to him as much larger than it really was; he therefore sent Riza Kouli Khan with a body of seventeen hundred Afghans, to pillage these unfortunate strangers, who had given him no offence. These forces arrived in Reshd the twentieth of January. The governor, Achmed Khan, retired to Lahijan, not being in a capacity to protect the city: thus they were

^a The beginning of July 1747, sent from Mesched. The new Shah was yet at Mesched, and appointed convoys for the ambassador, to conduct him from Astrabad to Dshadshirim and Esferaim,

^a See Vol. I. Chap. LXXVI.

were left to follow the dictates of their own wild suggestions ; whilst the villainy of some of the inhabitants prompted them to share the plunder, by purchasing the stolen goods at a very inconsiderable price ^b. The English factors took the precaution to retire with their money ; but their effects became a prey, and were totally pillaged, with circumstances that proved the madness of the times, and the destructive consequences ^c of civil war. The city of Reshd however escaped being plundered ; for it seemed to be the intention of Amur Aslan Khan, to support some reputation, in hopes of being acknowledged in a very short time as the sovereign of Persia.

The news of this incursion no sooner reached Ashreff, than Adil Shah dispatched a body of his troops to Reshd. The Afghans, loaded with their plunder, were marching back, but were reached no further than Keskar, when Achmed Khan, at the head of the Shah's troops, came up with them, and totally defeated them ^d. Their spoil fell into the hands of the Shah's forces, who it was but natural to expect, as they were sent for the support of government, and the succour of the injured, should have made it their chief business to obtain restitution ; but this was a degree of virtue which they did not even attempt. Amur Aslan Khan having met with this defeat, resolved to remain only on the defensive ; he was already in correspondency with the king's brother, Ibrahim Myrza, and if we may judge from circumstances, was the chief promoter of the rebellion of this young prince against his brother ; secretly intending to reap the fruits of that quarrel, in which he hoped to see them soon involved ; since, by playing one against the other, his expectations were in the highest degree flattered, that he should obtain the diadem himself.

Adil Shah finding that he had a formidable enemy to contend with in the west, sent orders to his brother Ibrahim in Isfahan, to come to his succour with a large body of forces, designing as soon as the spring was a little farther advanced, to march against Amur Aslan Khan. Ibrahim, who was now only twenty-two years of age, in the vanity of his heart, thought it absurd, at the head of a numerous body of forces, to be any thing less than a king : the revolt of Amur Aslan Khan had, in his fond imagination, prepared so easy a means of obtaining the diadem, that he had little more to do than to receive it. But in order to bring about another revolution,

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^b See Vol. I. Chap. LXXVI.^c See Vol. I. Chap. LXXVI.^d See Vol. I. Chap. LXXVI.

it was necessary to render his brother's government odious to the people, at least to secure the inclination of the officers and and soldiers under his command. Here again religion was the plea, and the very motive which ought to have disposed their minds to a grateful submission to the dispensation of providence, was prostituted to the purposes of wild ambition.

Ali Kouli Khan, from a certain generosity of disposition, had ever since he was appointed governor of Mesched, shewn a particular regard to the christians: his favourite wife was a Georgian lady of the religion of her country, and for whom he had an entire affection. Being now advanced to the regal dignity, he promoted her brother Zorab Khan to the office of his treasurer, and commander of his army. The Shah seemed in this to err in judgment, as it had not been lately a practice to commit so high a trust to one born a christian, and who, it might be presumed, still inclined to that persuasion. This was the pretended cause of Ibrahim's disaffection to his brother.

The Shah had soon reason to fear that the authority which he had given to Ibrahim Myrza to raise forces, was not employed agreeably to his intentions. Under this apprehension, he sent his brother-in-law Zorab Khan to Isfahan with the strongest assurances of his affection, and with promises to gratify him in any thing that was reasonable; and that he might see by the dignity of the messenger, in what high esteem he held him. It is reasonable to presume that the Shah was sincere, and from thence flattered himself into a belief that his brother Ibrahim might be won over to a sense of duty. If these were not his sentiments, it was highly impolitic to trust his brother-in-law in the possession of his enemy: the event proved that this young man was not to be brought over by intreaties, for Zorab Khan soon after his arrival was treacherously put to death as he was bathing.

Ibrahim Myrza having thus thrown off the mask, wrote to Mehtie Khan*, one of the Shah's generals, inviting him and the soldiers under his command to take part with him against the king. He could not corrupt this general, but he brought over part of his forces. The Shah finding his security thus endangered, wrote to his brother in very affectionate and pathetic terms, representing the dreadful calamities of civil war, and that his revolt must necessarily bring on the total ruin of their poor country, already in an expiring condition,

* This is the man who wrote Nadir's history, which has never yet appeared in the world, nor probably never will.

dition, with the wounds it had received by the cruelty and ambition of their uncle: at the same time he made proposals of a composition, which might gratify his brother's desire of a state in a great measure independent. Those who wished well to the tranquillity of Persia, flattered themselves with some hopes, that possibly the two brothers might, by sharing the sovereignty, unite in one common interest, and by quashing Amur Aslan Khan, restore the kingdom to peace; but that was only a fond presumption: the same disposition which determined Ibrahim to revolt, rendered a compromise of that kind impracticable, were such union consistent in the nature of things.

In the mean while, the minds of the people were distracted with anxiety, concerning the issue of a war, which would probably afford occasion for fresh competitions, and involve their unhappy country in inextricable miseries. No recourse now remained but that of arms. In the month of May, Adil Shah marched with a great body of forces from Mazanderan, through a narrow pass in mount Taurus, towards the plains of Casbin, where he had appointed his rendezvous. Achmed Khan, with a strong reinforcement from Ghilan, was ordered to march through the streights of that province to meet him. Ibrahim Myrza at the head of his army, had already left Isfahan, and having notice of the intended junction of his brother's armies, made forced marches in order to intercept Achmed Khan, which he accomplished without the loss of any blood. This unhappy general fell in with the enemy's camp early in the morning, mistaking it for a body of forces belonging to the Shah his master, and was taken prisoner by Ibrahim Myrza. We have already mentioned, that Achmed Khan gave the first check to the arms of Amur Aslan Khan. Ibrahim therefore thought he could not make his court more agreeably to his confederate, than by sending this general to be sacrificed. Amur Aslan was too much a copy of Nadir, to have any mercy; and ordered Achmed as soon as he arrived, to be brought to the entrance of his tent where he gratified his revenge, by seeing him cut to pieces.

Adil Shah advancing towards his rebellious brother, who feigned a retreat, was drawn into a snare. Being attacked in flank by a great body of Afghans, he was deserted by his army in so shameful a manner, that he lost the day without putting it to the issue of a battle. He behaved with great personal valour and intrepidity, killing several with his own hands; till at length seeing his forces scattered, he left the field, and retired to Tæhيران. There finding himself abandoned,

doned, and utterly incapable of collecting his army, after three days he went to Ibrahim's camp, and surrendered himself; the only proof of mercy he received from this unnatural brother, was in being suffered to live a short time; but in that interval it was not permitted him to see his brother, nor even to enjoy the light, for his eyes were cut out immediately.

Thus ended the short and unhappy reign of Adil Shah. He was a man of an easy placid temper, and might in times of less corruption have made a good king; but he does not appear to have had a genius equal to so weighty a task, as the government of so impious a people. All we can say of him is, that he has been the only prince since Nadir, who has been considered as a sovereign by any foreign state: that he meant to support his government upon principles the reverse of Nadir's; and, had he lived, that he would, to all appearance, have done justice to those, who suffered by the villainy of Amur Aslan Khan.

Notwithstanding his success, Ibrahim retained the name of Myrza, declining that of Shah. It is probable he was the more induced to this reserve, by the tokens which Amur Aslan Khan immediately gave of a design of usurping the sovereignty. This Khan was turned of sixty years of age, and could not but consider Ibrahim as a boy by no means entitled to the diadem, compared with himself. He was at the head of thirty thousand men enured to war under the command of Nadir, and had acquired a great proficiency in the science of arms, as well as political intrigue. In the last he had already succeeded, by having been one great instrument in the defeat of Adil Shah. He was too much of the genius of his old master, to promise Persia that repose for which she languished, but which never could be found by means so apparently destructive of the end.

1749. After resting his troops, and dividing the spoil taken from his brother, Ibrahim prepared for a visit to Amur Aslan Khan, and for that purpose directed his march towards Shirvan. Youthful as he was, he acted the politician, preferring the removal of his competitor by assassination, rather than to put his fortune to the issue of a battle. Art and contrivance not founded in justice, often betray their own cause. The crafty Amur Aslan was thus taken in the snare he laid for others, and fell a sacrifice to his ambition. What became of his army is not said, we may presume it was dispersed.

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† The British merchants mentioned already.

In the mean while the eastern parts of the empire being left unawed by the presence of an army, the inhabitants espoused the cause of the young Shahrokh already mentioned; and he was declared king, at Mesched. The officers and persons of distinction in that quarter were the more disposed to take this step, as it gave them an opportunity, under the name of a regal authority, to possess themselves of the great riches which yet remained at Kælat. In such a confusion of affairs, Persia might be easily imposed on with regard to the identity of this person: happy were it for that distracted country, if such imposition could have restored it to tranquillity.

Ibrahim Myrza was now informed concerning his new adversary. Flushed with conquest, he had extended his liberality beyond the prudence of a general, or the experience of more advanced years. At length he found himself grown poor and incapable of gratifying the demands of his army, which was chiefly composed of Afghans, not disposed to follow their leader, without either pay or provision. There was no possibility of exacting contributions in a country already drained, not of money only, but of almost every thing necessary to the support of life. Many of his soldiers knowing where to find another master, who was reputed rich, deserted. What constancy could he expect from men who had just turned their arms against a prince whom they acknowledged a few months before as the deliverer of their country from the yoke of insupportable tyranny! Thus circumstanced, Ibrahim was induced to hasten his march eastward, as well to obtain a fresh supply of money, as to quash his enemy. He had not advanced far, when he met with some partisans of Shahrokh. His van-guard having reached Tæhيران, were refused a supply of provisions: Ibrahim immediately sent Emir Khan, the general of his artillery, with his cannon and a strong detachment, to compel the inhabitants to compliance. It appears that Emir Khan had no opinion of his master's cause, or was secretly dissatisfied; in short, he took the opportunity to abandon Ibrahim, and join his opponents: for as soon as this prince came under the walls of the town, Emir Khan turned the cannon upon him, and sallying out at the same time, by this unexpected attack dispersed his army. It is probable that Ibrahim ended his life upon this occasion, as we hear nothing more of him from that time. Thus did Providence bring to confusion this rash youth, who with less vanity, and a little more understanding, might have operated with his brother, and instead

stead of involving his country in misery, restored it to a prosperous condition.

Shahrokh Shah was now without a competitor. During these commotions, the Afghans of Kandahar, or some other subjects in the eastern frontier^s, revolted : Shahrokh having formed a considerable army, marched against them. What the success of this enterprize was, my authorities are silent : but in his absence from Khorasan, appeared a fifth competitor. There was an uncle of Shah Tæhmas, named Suliman, who, during the reign of Nadir, having given no marks of ambition, and taken the habit of a Mullah, lived quiet and unmolested. This man was now dragged to the throne as it were on purpose to be slaughtered : his adherents had prevailed on him to assume the diadem ; but his reign was very short, for upon Shahrokh's return he became a sacrifice. It is said that one Ismael then set up against Shahrokh. We have great reason to believe, that the latter, for some time, promised fair to maintain himself in the throne, till at length he was obliged to yield to Shah Doub, of whose family I have no information.

Heraclius, a Georgian prince, then appeared on the stage, whose fortune is yet said to prevail over all competition. This prince's being a christian, seems to render his establishment very difficult ; nor is it easy to imagine that the Turks will be idle spectators of a christian king of Persia. They have already had the satisfaction to see the deepest humiliation of their hereditary enemy. Nadir, who died their fields with blood, and whose very name so often made them tremble, has, by the consequences of his tyranny, reduced Persia more effectually, than could have been performed by any foreign enemy. Though the sword is not the just instrument of propagating the faith of the true Messiah, yet it is a circumstance worthy of attention, that the Georgians are a very brave people, and may, by the countenance of the Russians, be capable of carrying greater designs into execution than the world is at present aware of.

When we consider the fate of kingdoms, we ought to observe, how men are led astray by their passions, against the light of their own minds. How infatuated were the Persians, or how lost to all sense of virtue, after a series of bitter calamities, to depose their true king, when the experience of ages had taught them there could be no security under an usurper. But what were they to expect from such a king as Nadir Kouli, whose hands were so deeply imbrued
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^s This particular I never heard with any exactness.

in blood ? What could be expected, but that a man of his genius and principles, bred up to murder and rapine from his earliest life, would bring all things into confusion ? Yet even in the politer regions of the world, such are the impressions which mankind ordinarily receive from military achievements, that events which ought to draw tears for the distresses of human nature, are made the subject of joy and exultation, till a reverse of fortune gives a quick sense of the fatal effects of such false glory. How execrably pernicious are the fond notions of happiness, arising from the successful invasion of another's right ! Crimes, for which every law, divine and human, condemn a private man to death, become warrantable by the laws of arms. What wisdom and integrity ought to wield the sword, which at best is but the instrument of divine justice for the correction of national crimes and offences !

It cannot be from the original constitution of things, that the Almighty has ordained war as essential to the well-being of mankind. The state of nature is a state of peace ; but the shedding of human blood becomes familiar by habit, and a continued course of foreign wars prepares the minds of a people for every desperate enterprize, of which the worst is intestine broils ; and these have at length extinguished the glory of Persia. What the fate of that wretched country will be, heaven only knows : but this is evident, that the splendor of their monarchy, all their monuments of art and labour, with all the industry of past ages, are swallowed up by the ravages of war. What numbers of their towns, their cities, their fruitful plains and delicious mountains, are become a dreary waste, and the habitation of wolves !

The fate of empires is a subject the most interesting. Reason and religion teach us to implore the almighty disposer of events, to succour mankind in general ; we ought then to send up our prayers, that his mercy may extend to the Persians, and restore them to a just sense of virtue, that their nation may again become great and happy.

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